

**THE OWNERSHIP OF KNOWLEDGE:
LITERACY AND ORALITY IN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION
IN UGANDA**

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ABSTRACT

Adult theological education in Uganda is characterised by knowledge transfer rather than knowledge ownership. The urgent need to prepare church leaders has resulted in the application of Northern literacy-based curricula and pedagogy. In the Ugandan context, minimal attention has been given to crucial elements of adult learning theory and practice. This is seen to frustrate the internalisation, processing and use of knowledge in effective, innovative and appropriate ways.

An historical review of the development of the current education system in Uganda reveals consistent problematic issues arising from the Western orientation of curricula, particularly in terms of the choice of language of instruction and the interface between literacy and orality. This study reveals that the simple adoption or adaptation of Northern approaches to curriculum and pedagogy disregards the effects of the local political economy and culture upon learning. It also indicates that adult learning styles that are formatively shaped by indigenous learning and knowledge systems are ignored or minimised. In addition, the infusion of literacy into orality creates a dynamism which critically informs the way in which meaning is derived from text. This analysis leads to the application of discourse theory as a bridge between literacy-focused formal education and orality-based indigenous learning.

The study adopts a qualitative, multi-dimensional methodological approach that blends grounded theory and critical social research. This enables theory to emerge through the voice of the stakeholders whilst maintaining a critical theoretical perspective. Conducted in five colleges representing three Christian denominations, the research examines elements which disrupt or enable the ownership of knowledge among Ugandan adult theological students with limited formal schooling experience. Three ruptures are exposed that inhibit and restrict the ownership of knowledge. First, the development of a meta-level knowledge of primary and secondary discourses is frustrated through lack of opportunity to acquire the secondary discourse and the limited use of the primary discourse by learners within the institutional context. Second, the dynamic learning interface between literacy and orality is restricted by preference for the dominant literacy. Third, the use of English as the preferred language of instruction is shown to obstruct the ownership of knowledge. Given these ruptures, it is suggested that the use of oral and literacy-based hermeneutic skills, coupled with a mediated pedagogical approach, may point the way out of an education of disjuncture and towards the ownership of knowledge.

Declaration

I declare that I have composed *The Ownership of Knowledge: literacy and orality in theological education in Uganda* and that is my own work, that it has not been submitted, in whole or in part, for any other degree or professional qualification, and that all sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Brent Douglas Slater

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABE	ADULT BASIC EDUCATION
ADEA	ASSOCIATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION IN AFRICA
BUU	BAPTIST UNION OF UGANDA
CB	CONSERVATIVE BAPTIST
CMS	CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY
COU	CHURCH OF UGANDA
DP	DEMOCRATIC PARTY
ESIP	EDUCATION STRATEGIC INVESTMENT PLAN
EFA	EDUCATION FOR ALL
EWLP	EXPERIMENTAL WORLD LITERACY PROGRAMME
FAL	FUNCTIONAL ADULT LITERACY
FALSIP	FUNCTIONAL ADULT LITERACY STRATEGIC INVESTMENT PLAN
F.G.	FOCUS GROUP
KEST	KAMPALA EVANGELICAL SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
LABE	LITERACY AND ADULT BASIC EDUCATION
LBS	LOCAL BIBLE SCHOOL
NGO	NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION
OECD	ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT
O.I.	ORAL INTERVIEW
P7	PRIMARY SEVEN
PAF	POVERTY ACTION FUND
PEAP	POVERTY ERADICATION ACTION PLAN
PRA	PARTICIPATION REFLECTION ACTION

RCC	ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
REFLECT	REGENERATED FREIREAN LITERACY THROUGH EMPOWERING COMMUNITY TECHNIQUES (ACTION AID)
SB	SOUTHERN BAPTIST
S4	SENIOR FOUR
UBS	UGANDA BAPTIST SEMINARY
UKFIET	UK FORUM FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING
UNDP	UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
UNICEF	UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND
UPC	UGANDA PEOPLE'S CONGRESS
UPE	UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION
WUBTC	WESTERN UGANDA BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

INTRODUCTION

The phrase 'ownership of knowledge' has an abstract, almost ethereal ring to it. Yet it cuts to the core of what education is all about. It refers to the way in which knowledge is internalised by the learner. It includes how it is decoded and manipulated by a person in his or her community, so that it can be re-presented and used in authentic and creative ways. It influences the process of education in the design of curricula and pedagogy, but, even more importantly, it touches the product of education – knowledge and change in and through the life of the learner. Education is about knowledge; its communication, development, use and ownership. All of these dimensions are practical. This research developed out of the researcher's own practical experience of teaching adults in Uganda. A brief introduction is required, therefore, in order to clarify the background, context and approach which characterises the study itself.

In 1984, the researcher arrived in Uganda to work with the Baptist Union of Uganda (BUU) in leadership development, a responsibility he maintains to the present. The wonders of this land and its people have kept him enthralled and challenged. Leadership development within the church has many varied aspects, which include informal, non-formal and institutional approaches to education. The demand for theological education for adults in a 'formalised'¹ setting increased dramatically with the relative stability and reconstruction which came to Uganda in the 1990s.

The researcher's involvement in teaching in theological training centres was both enriching and discouraging. The desire to learn on the part of the adults in these programmes was nothing less than voracious. However, the anticipated change, both in them personally and in their ministry within the churches, was often

¹ The word 'formalised' will be used in reference to adult education programmes which are not part of the national system of formal schooling itself, but which share important formal features with that system such as teacher-centred and classroom-bounded instruction. These programmes have also been termed "extra-formal" by Rogers (1996: 2).

disappointingly slow or even non-existent.² Most of these adults were from rural parts of Uganda and may have had only minimal formal education (possibly primary school only). It was evident that they were very capable cognitively and were often heard to be debating church-related issues amongst themselves. Yet there was a clear gap between what they learned and what they practised.

When the BUU sought the researcher's assistance in evaluating all Baptist theological education programmes in Uganda, he requested their permission to pursue this study in order to develop a broader and deeper understanding of what was disrupting the learning and ownership processes. This would involve including theological programmes and institutions from the Church of Uganda (COU) and the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) as well as those from the Baptist Church in order to provide balance and to enrich the findings. The BUU responded positively and encouraged the researcher throughout the research process.³ It should be emphasised that practicality, in the proper sense, drives this study, both in its origin and in its purpose. Best practice, however, is founded on good theory.

TERMS, PARAMETERS AND FOCUS

'Adult education' is a broad field with multiple dimensions and, therefore, its use in this thesis requires clarification. Perhaps it will be most profitable to explain what it is not, in the context of adult theological education in Uganda, before defining what it is. It is not used here in the sense of adult basic education (ABE), nor is it a reference to simple skills training. It is not what is often termed adult further education or continuing education because for many of these learners there is very little prior education upon which they can base further studies.

² Such a change was anticipated in the first case by the researcher as a teacher, but, as will become clear, the expectations of church leaders and of the students themselves for change and growth were often unfulfilled as well.

³ Church of Uganda and Catholic leadership were also very supportive of the need for this study and the researcher has agreed to share the results of the study with them.

Instead, adult education here refers to “the planned process of purposeful learning” (Rogers 1992: 20) with the aid of instructors and in the context of curricular studies within a theological institution. It is broad and includes history, geography and communication as well as theological subjects. Normally it follows prior work or ministry experience in the church rather than prior schooling. Its purpose is primarily to prepare lay leaders for local congregations or churches. This requires essential theological and historical knowledge, as well as leadership skills which serve to undergird the practical ministry of teaching, counselling and preaching in the local parish (Mugambi 1995: 26). In this sense, it is a re-appropriation of the notion of adult education as vocational, in its classic sense.

Literacy, in the context of this kind of adult education, does not refer to the basic literacy skills of reading, writing and numeracy. The learners in this study began their programmes when they already had those skills. At the same time, it does not refer to the development of post-literacy skills, although this should be a natural by-product of such education. Instead, literacy denotes the ability to use written texts in order to access, process and develop knowledge. It is the ability not only to function, but also to develop within the literature-based world of ideas. Literacy will be discussed in the context of basic skills and local uses as well, in order to address the critical issues of working with and developing knowledge within the world of written texts.

‘Transformation’ is an integral part of education within this study. There are at least three reasons for this. The very nature of theological education evokes the concept of transformation. Theology may be defined in philosophical terms as the “rationalization of a religion” (Mugambi 1996: 22). It is the study of God (or gods) and people’s relationship to the spiritual. It addresses the fundamental questions of ultimate origin, ultimate purpose and ultimate destiny (Mugambi 1996: 23). These essential and foundational questions are transformational in their very nature. Therefore, transformation should be a natural and desirable aspect of theological education.

From a theoretical perspective, the ownership of any object normally results in some form of change at least to the owner, and usually to the object that is owned as well.

When knowledge is owned by the learner, it begins to transform the way that person thinks and acts. It is no longer a catalogue of facts and theories to be memorised and repeated, but it becomes an integral part of the person himself.⁴ It is understood that not all adult education necessarily needs to be transformational. However, if theological education in Uganda is to develop the church, it will be transformative. Knowledge that is owned changes people, structures, and knowledge itself. Admittedly, such education for transformation may not change whole societies or even whole ecclesiastical communities, yet that should not lessen its value where change does take place.

Finally, transformation is central to this thesis because of the way this study has transformed the researcher's own conceptual frameworks and approaches to theological education and its practice. The opportunity to be immersed in theory and thought as well as interacting with educators and learners has caused dynamic upheavals, reversals, confirmations and innovations in his approach to theological education in Uganda. The participation reflection action (PRA)⁵ groups and interview sessions conducted in the course of the fieldwork caused the researcher to wonder why, during sixteen years of teaching in Uganda, he had not previously taken the time to ask the adult learners how they actually learn! He has already begun to change his pedagogical approach in light of the findings of this research. He has owned this knowledge and it has, in some way, also owned him.

IN SEARCH OF THE OWNERSHIP OF KNOWLEDGE

The objective of this research, then, is to discover how knowledge is owned in theological adult education in Uganda. It seeks to expose elements which either facilitate or frustrate the internalisation and effective processing of knowledge by adult learners. This is accomplished by using multiple qualitative research methods

⁴ The masculine pronoun will often be used in order to enable readability in this thesis. It should, however, be taken in the generic sense to apply to all people.

⁵ PRA began with the meaning of participatory rural appraisal in community agricultural education and training. Chambers suggests that participation reflection action may better account for the variety of current uses, and this is the meaning adopted by this study (Chambers 1997).

which enable theory and knowledge to emerge through the data. The emergent theory is then analysed through critical discursive theory.⁶

The thesis is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter provides the historical background of education in Uganda, and the theoretical framework is developed in chapters two and three. The research questions and methodological approach are explained in chapter four, in light of the historical and theoretical framework developed in the previous chapters. Chapters five and six present the field research findings in two parts, enabling both 'voice' and analysis. Chapter seven then draws the threads of data and analysis together, suggesting possible implications of the research for theological adult education in Uganda.

The beginnings of the formal education system are traced historically in chapter one. The central roles played by missionaries and the church in this process provide a natural bridge to the examination of theological education. Important issues which have recurrently plagued education in Uganda are raised within their historical context. These include the Western orientation of the curriculum, the language of instruction, and the interface between literacy and orality.

These central historical issues lead to a consideration of how adult education can best position itself within Uganda's larger educational framework in the second chapter. This entails an examination of adult education theory in the light of Uganda's political economy, global influences and the desire for credentials among adults. An analysis of the influence of culture and indigenous education systems upon adult learning distils the essential importance of oral and written forms of working with knowledge. These lead to a theoretical study of orality and literacy which reveals the dynamic potential that is unleashed into the learning process through the interface between these two approaches to working with knowledge. The historical, cultural

⁶ Chapter three will examine how discourse theory is derived from linguistic studies while critical theory emerges from sociological research. They are two separate theoretical frameworks, which have often stimulated each other in literacy and educational research. The theoretical stance adopted in this thesis uses aspects of each of these theoretical positions. The resulting blend will be termed 'critical discursive theory'.

and communal values accredited to oral processes in Uganda are increasingly informed by the growing importance of literacy-based learning and work. Taken together, these help to develop parameters within which adult education can be most effective.

Discourse theory⁷ is suggested, in chapter three, to offer a conceptual framework that is able to encompass the potentially divergent and oppositional approaches to learning that are exposed in the first two chapters. Similarly, hermeneutics is proposed as a means through which meaning may be derived from both oral and written sources of knowledge. It is suggested that the cultural and political economy of learning, the dynamic interface between orality and literacy and the pursuit of meaning are enabled by the combined application of discourse theory, critical theory and hermeneutics to become catalysts rather than inhibitors for ownership.

Chapter four develops a methodological framework for the research which couples grounded theory with critical social theory. This provides space for the voice of the participants in adult theological education in Uganda and enables theoretical insight to emerge from the stakeholders themselves. At the same time, it supplies a process of analysis and critique of the data exposed through that voice, which is consistent with grounded theory itself.

These historical, theoretical and methodological considerations provide the basis for the generation of field research data which is detailed and examined in chapters five and six. This data is presented in two parts. Chapter five provides a space for voice. Qualitative data is presented to enable the reader to grasp how theory emerged from the voice of the participants. Obstacles to the ownership of knowledge emerge as three recurrent themes: the disparity between two different approaches to learning, a debilitating clash between orality and literacy, and the problem of language. Chapter

⁷ The term 'discourse' is used in this study in its socio-linguistic sense as developed through the writing of James Paul Gee (1990), which will be examined in depth in chapter three. Discourse refers to the ways in which people think it is 'right' to act, think and speak. Perceptions of what is 'right' differ, depending on context. It should be clear that it is not used in the sense of discourse between people or discourse analysis (the detailed analysis of speech).

six provides an analysis of these themes through critical literacy theory in order to clarify the cultural, pedagogical and educational principles which inform these ruptures in the development of knowledge ownership. It reveals the hegemonic control of knowledge through the distancing of instructors from learners, the preference for the dominant literacy over orality and local literacies and the use of English as the language of instruction.

The thesis concludes, in chapter seven, with an attempt to distil hope out of rupture. Critical theory suggests that a new discursive space may be created in which ownership could occur. First, the development of hermeneutic skills which enable meaning to be derived through both orality and literacy would serve to demystify texts. Second, a mediated pedagogical approach would provide a space in which meta-cognitive learning would be enabled in multiple discourses. The blending of voice and critical discursive theory suggest that ruptures may become interdiscursive opportunities in which the transfer of knowledge can be transformed into the ownership of knowledge.

Chapter One

WHOSE EDUCATION? AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

You cannot fill your granaries with borrowed grain. (Mbiti 1986: 7)

An historical survey of modern education in Uganda must begin with the recognition that education was present in Uganda long before the advent of formal schooling in the nineteenth century. Indigenous education had produced a relatively settled and advanced culture and society in many parts of present day Uganda well in advance of the coming of Arabs and Europeans onto the scene. However, the objective of this chapter is to give an account of the development of the current modern education system in Uganda. This will be examined in two parts, by first following the development of the state or secular school system and then by looking at the growth of theological education. It will quickly be evident that theological and basic education actually developed in tandem in Uganda, particularly in the early stages.

The goal of this historical study is not the simple recounting of events in an ordered manner. That has been done elsewhere in much greater detail than here. The purpose is to observe through history the forces which have influenced the character and content of Uganda's present education system. This chapter presents an historical analysis of who and what determined the content, character and sense of ownership of education in Uganda. It will also highlight the origins of essential educational issues which affect adult education in Uganda even today. The substantial influences of colonialism, new religions (Christianity and Islam), independence, financial constraints, and globalisation have all contributed to the formation of Uganda's education system. This chapter will pay primary attention to the role of religious groups in this process of educational development.

STATE OR SECULAR EDUCATION

BEFORE 1900

In 1875, the avid explorer, Henry Morton Stanley, arrived at the Court of Mutesa I. Mutesa was the Kabaka or ruler of the Baganda⁸ people after whom Uganda was named. Mutesa I ruled a large and well-ordered kingdom which impressed the many foreigners who were soon to enter his realm. Stanley suggested to the Kabaka that he should receive Christian missionaries, offering to write a letter suggesting to the Church in Europe that they be sent. This letter was published in the *Daily Telegraph* in November, 1875 (Karugire 1978: 3). It is probable that Mutesa, like many other African rulers of the time, did not fully realise what missionaries would do once they arrived. Still, the idea of having Europeans at his court may have been attractive to him as a political and strategic tool against the forces of Arab slave traders, Egyptian generals' incursions to the north, and the constant friction with the kingdom of Bunyoro to the west (Karugire 1978: 4; Ward and White 1971: 15).

The first missionaries, Shergold Smith and C. T. Wilson, arrived in Buganda on June 30, 1877. They were members of the Church Missionary Society (CMS). Just a short time later, on February 23, 1879, Father Lourdel and Brother Amans of the Roman Catholic White Fathers arrived. Initially, these foreigners were restricted to staying at the court of Mutesa, probably to enable him to keep a close eye on them (Karugire 1978: 4-6; Pirouet 1968: 83). The Church Mission Society (CMS) missionaries were English while the White Fathers were French. Continental tensions between the British and French coupled with denominational competition were to contribute to friction in the early days of missionary work. In 1885, the primary colonial powers met in Berlin affirming the Berlin Act, which divided up the African continent for colonisation (Ward and White 1971: 31-32). Yet, it was the Germans rather than the French who were important players in East Africa. The Anglo-German Agreement of 1890 recognised Uganda as a sphere of British

⁸ 'Ba' in Bantu languages is the prefix for a culturally and linguistically defined group of people.

influence setting the stage for British control of Uganda as a protectorate (Ward and White 1971: 42).

Muslims had already arrived in Uganda during the 1840s as Arab traders (Karugire 1978: 4). It was not long before friction broke out between the Muslims and Christians for influence at the court. Mutesa I had died in 1884 and was succeeded by his son, Mwanga. The new Kabaka's resentment at the growing influence of these foreign religions led to persecution in 1886, with the martyrdom of some of the new Christian believers. This was followed in 1888 by the expulsion of Christians from Buganda by the Muslims as they gained influence with the Kabaka. The Christians, Anglican and Catholic alike, fled to Ankole in the west and joined forces to battle the Muslims and return to Buganda in 1890 (Tuma 1978: 20-22).

From the very beginning, the missionaries began to teach new converts to read and write (Rowe 2002: 53).⁹ The first students were reported by Wilson in December 1877, five short months after his arrival. He noted that he was teaching four pupils who had come to him on their own initiative asking to be taught to read and write in preparation for baptism (Tuma 1978: 18). Learning to read in order to learn the catechism became a prerequisite for baptism among the Anglican converts. Consequently, the very first forms of literacy training were intricately intertwined with evangelism and instruction within the church (Oliver 1965: 212). These young 'readers' would then go out and teach others to read, becoming teachers themselves even while they were still learning (Hastings 1994: 465; Karugire 1978: 10).

This simple beginning in education was soon to equal or even surpass evangelism as the primary objective and activity of the missions. As early as 1897 Bishop Tucker wanted to introduce an organised system of education (Tuma 1978: 25). The Catholics had also begun teaching their converts so that by the turn of the century missionary work was investing heavily in education. The usual content of instruction in this early period was religion, reading, writing, arithmetic, and simple handicrafts.

⁹ Article 6 of the Berlin Act made missionaries objects of special protection because of the service they were understood to offer through educating Africans and bringing them civilisation (Hansen 2002a: 158).

Yet, instruction was somewhat irregular as missionaries' energies were pulled in many other directions as well (Hindmarsh 1966: 141). Still, in these early years and in these simple 'bush schools',¹⁰ a dynamic force had been unleashed. The 'book' had invaded African consciousness (Hastings 1994: 543). Popular African culture had been infected, as it were, by literacy.

As the nineteenth century drew to a close in Uganda, the stage was set for the tremendous expansion of education. Uganda had undergone many changes already. The power of the Kabaka was being diminished both by British colonial interests and by the major social upheaval that occurred with the influx of Christianity and literacy. The world of the Baganda, and of all the peoples of the future Uganda, had already changed irrevocably. In the words of Adrian Hastings,

The plans were made in the 1880s. The actual partition took place mostly in the 1890s. By 1900, of the African political world as it had been for centuries only Ethiopia retained its independence. A new political geography, imposed quite arbitrarily by European power in a matter of fifteen years, had created in principle an extraordinarily different context for every side of human activity, religion as much as anything. The history of African Christianity could not possibly escape the consequences of the colonial revolution (Hastings 1994: 400).

1900-1925

The central role which missions would play in the development of education in Uganda was solidified during the first quarter of the twentieth century. The missiological thinking which brought education to the fore can be seen in snapshot form by looking at the Edinburgh Missionary Conference of 1910. This Protestant missionary conference was intended to point the way to further growth, but in fact, it marked the beginning of a gradual decline in mainline denominations' involvement in missions, which was to characterise the coming century. What the conference did signal was the beginning of organised interdenominational ecumenism (Hastings 1994: 550-551). There was a distinct shift from the previous century's conservative,

¹⁰ These were considered to be 'bush' schools because they were found in the rural, rather than urban centres.

scripturally evangelical missionary to a more liberal humanitarianism. This shift was to be exemplified in an ever-growing focus upon humanitarian ministries to people, such as education and medicine. The older missiological emphasis on evangelism was to be taken up by a new breed of evangelical protestant missions emanating primarily from the United States as the century moved along.

Around the turn of the century, both Anglican and Catholic missions began to invest more of their resources into education. The Catholics maintained their emphasis on religious and clerical education during the first few years of the new century, but the CMS missionaries wasted no time in reorienting their education programmes to promote the formation of moral character through both general and religious education (Ssekamwa and Lugumba 1973: 1). By 1903 the CMS had 22,000 children in their various schools. The growth of education as a major sector of ministry was so great that in 1904 the CMS set up their own Board of Education. This was twenty years before any such body was even considered seriously by the civil colonial administration of Uganda (Hindmarsh 1966: 143). By 1920, these numbers were to swell to 70,000 boys and 45,000 girls in school. However, many of them did not stay long enough to finish the primary school course¹¹ and so from the beginning retention of students in school was to be a constant challenge (Ward and White 1971: 247).

The majority of schools were not of a very high academic calibre, but by 1924 they had multiplied around the whole country, reaching almost every district. (Ssekamwa and Lugumba 1973: 2) High Schools were often boarding schools and normally had a European as head teacher.¹² Then, lower down the ladder were Central Schools, which served as day schools and offered a more rudimentary education. Finally,

¹¹ At this early stage, it is possible that the benefit of continuing with education may not have been very clear for many Ugandans as the link with jobs in the economy was not yet well defined.

¹² Concentrating students together, apart from their families and cultural ties, was believed to make them more amenable to change and formation. Boarding schools have continued to play an important role in secondary level education in Uganda. See Marvin (1977).

there were many 'bush schools' or 'subgrade'¹³ schools which often had no permanent staff or supervision. These schools were usually very rural and met where able and when able in order to provide the most basic form of literacy. They were normally connected to a church and were very religious in nature, preparing students to be good members and even lay leaders of the church (Hastings 1994: 475; Murray 1967: 80-87). The curriculum of the schools was not firmly established. This was partially due to the lack of permanent teachers and the irregular attendance of students. Consequently, flexibility and improvisation often ruled the day (Hindmarsh 1966: 142).

The twentieth century, we have said, saw the primary emphasis of the main missions in Uganda shift from direct evangelism to education. Bishop Willis, of CMS, stated in his first Episcopal Charge to the Uganda mission in 1912, that "Education is and must remain the backbone of our work" (cited in Hansen 1984: 250). Education became an indispensable part of the missionary endeavour. It was seen as the means to church growth as well as the best way to develop the moral character of the Ugandan people. "To the outsider, it looked as if there could be no education centre without the Church and equally there could be no Church centre without education" (Wandira 1978: 82). The words of the contemporary CMS historian Stock, after a visit to Uganda, clearly reveal missionary priorities of the day.

The work of the English missionaries at the capital and other chief stations is mainly educational and supervisory. In addition to about 350 elementary schools scattered over the country, which are taught by native teachers, there are the High Schools for the sons of chiefs and others who can pay the fees ... the King's School at Budo ... for a higher and partly English education, of which the Kabaka likes to call himself 'an old boy'; the Normal School for training school teachers, and the Theological Hall, for training lay readers and, in its highest department, candidates for ordination (Stock 1916: 90).

¹³ The term 'subgrade' was used to denote mainly rural schools that simply focused on the essentials of reading, writing and numeracy rather than to describe them as inferior. The struggle of these schools to maintain quality was a result of other factors such as poor supervision and their rural location.

The missions, in practice, maintained a monopoly on education during this time. The Commissioner of Uganda in 1903 pointed out that there was no need to start a state education system as the missions had undertaken both secular and religious education. As the missions became more and more deeply committed to education, a major objective was to prevent the colonial government from establishing a state system of education and to convince them instead to use the existing missions as educational agencies (Hansen 1984: 225). The modern separation of religion and secular education was certainly not a characteristic of these early mission schools. As a result, while the missionaries "did their utmost to improve educational facilities, their overzealous approach to religion meant that their institutions produced educated Roman Catholics or Protestants rather than educated Ugandans" (Ssekamwa and Lugumba 1973: 2).

Although there were some individuals within the colonial government who thought the government really ought to play a greater role in education, policy remained that the missions could handle education. Probably the greatest influencing factor supporting the missions' educational monopoly was the cost of education. It was hard to imagine any system that could compete with the missions in education without a tremendous drain on funds in Britain. The Colonial Office wanted to minimise the costs of subsidising the protectorate and maintained the goal of self-sufficiency for the Uganda Protectorate. As a result, the government succumbed to the requests of the missions and began offering grants to the mission schools instead of setting up a rival state system. In 1917, the missions began to experience the crushing financial burden of the ever-expanding school system and confronted the government, not for the first time, by asking for an increase in education grants. Although the government questioned whether denominational schools were really best for the public, in the end grants were increased to the missions (Hansen 1984: 226-228).

The important feature of the events of 1917 was that the colonial administration openly accepted that it was under an obligation to take on a greater share of the educational responsibility. It did not, however, consider any possibility other than the channelling of its additional funds for the support of education through the missions (Hansen 1984:229).

One result of the success of missions in developing their education systems was that most of the students who went through the schools saw the opportunity for clerical and teaching positions as the road to opportunity. Very few of the best students were entering the clergy. A problem of status was developing, with the clergy coming from the less well educated ranks of students while teachers and clerical workers were more educated. The CMS Educational Conference in 1915 noted that no one from the high schools, including King's College, Budo, had so far joined the clergy (Hansen 1984: 252).

The end of World War One saw the beginnings of public concern about the lack of government involvement in education. This was stimulated from several fronts simultaneously. Baganda leaders were concerned about the lack of higher education available within the country. They also felt that the education standards were too low in the schools which did exist. Speaking by their actions, the kings and leading chiefs began to send their sons overseas to seek better education outside of Africa. The government expressed concern about the 'detribalization' of those studying abroad and recognised the need to respond to the concerns of Ugandan leaders. At about the same time, a group of young Baganda formed the Young Baganda Association. They requested the government to establish technical schools and emphasised the need for more uniformity and less denominationalism in Ugandan education. As representatives of the new generation, these youth did not share with their parents the same sense of dependence upon and appreciation of the missions. Although not revolutionary, they expected reform (Hansen 1984: 234-236; King 1969: 8).

The government became increasingly concerned about the attitudes of Ugandans as they reached higher levels of education. There was concern that graduates felt above manual labour and did not want to return to the rural areas as agents of change. The Uganda Development Commission Report of 1920 stated,

We are opposed to any extensive literary education for the general native population, and we consider that it should not proceed beyond a standard which will enable a native to learn a trade by which he can earn a living. Unless literary education is complete, or is accompanied by a technical training, the native is apt to regard himself as a superior being for whom the

ordinary duties and responsibilities of life have no significance (Uganda Government 1920: 221).

The Commission also stated its position that education should be the duty of the government. However, it recommended that elementary education be left in the hands of the missions for the time being with government support. The hope was that the missions would exert a moral force upon the students which might even serve as a means of control. It further noted the importance of government inspection accompanying government grants. Finally, it highlighted, as seen in the above quotation, the importance of technical education being developed to a greater degree (Hansen 1984: 233, 237).

The government began to see its own role as providing forms of education which the missions were not able to provide. There were concerns that particular needs of the emerging society were not being met under the mission system, especially in the field of technical schooling. This prompted the establishment by the Protectorate Government of a technical school on Makerere Hill in 1922. From the beginning, it was hoped that Makerere would develop into the highest level school in the country. The government, then, first entered education proper at the highest echelon of schooling, allowing the missions to manage basic education countrywide (Hansen 1984: 231; Hindmarsh 1966: 143; Ward and White 1971: 247).

It was at this point that the influential Phelps-Stokes Commission visited Uganda from March 10-23, 1924. The Commission's subsequent report was to serve as a catalyst in bringing the government more fully into the educational system. The Commission's report made two primary points. First, it commended the missions for their work in education, but recommended greater involvement by the government. Secondly it noted the very low level of educational standards and recommended greater government supervision.

Missionaries were not only the pioneers in opening Uganda to the influences of civilization and Christianity, but they have also maintained practically all the educational activities which exist up to the present time. With full appreciation of the services of the past, it is now generally recognized, alike by mission societies and Government, that educational facilities must be enlarged and better adapted to the needs of the Native people. This applies

especially to the supervision of the little out-schools, now comparatively ineffective, whose potential influence is great (Jones 1925: 142).

The importance placed by the Commission upon government involvement in education and inspection is made crystal clear later in the report.

It is in the inspection and administration of schools that the greatest defects in the educational system in Uganda are most manifested. In the first place there is no government Department of Education and no government inspecting staff. This is so serious a defect as to be in itself almost sufficient to account for much of the weakness in Uganda education (Jones 1925: 164).

In its evaluation of the standards of schools in East Africa the Commission noted,

Indeed there are no schools for Natives in East Africa which in relation to Western standards can be properly described as secondary schools. Nor are there any professional schools of either secondary or college standard (Jones 1925: 43).

The report records the number of school age children in 1922 as 640,000. Of these 157,000 were enrolled in some kind of school. However, it notes that only 18,000 of this number were enrolled in various kinds of 'central schools' while 139,000 were attending the 'out-schools' or bush schools which "are very limited in ... quality and quantity of instruction" (Jones 1925:152). The Protectorate Government's level of support was also challenged as insufficient. The report notes that only 2% of total government expenditures were for education (Jones 1925: 149).

Another important emphasis to be found in the Phelps-Stokes report is the need for greater Ugandan involvement in education strategy with the aim of making education more relevant to the needs of the community. It condemns the missionary education for being "too exclusively literary" and not sufficiently related to community life and needs. As an example, the report states that in a country with such unusually rich and fertile soil there had been practically no provision for agricultural education (Jones 1925:162). The relevance of such a literary curriculum would prove to be a recurring problem through the end of the century. Repeated attempts to address the issue have been met with inertia or even resistance by parents and students who believe that any progressive tinkering with the established curriculum is a lowering of standards.

The Makerere School was seen as an important development by the Phelps-Stokes Commission. The school was opened with 14 students and offered a higher level of training than any of the mission schools. Its purpose was to train teachers, medical assistants, surveyors, commercial assistants such as clerks, telegraphers and bookkeepers, carpenters, mechanics, and gardeners. The curriculum, as outlined by the report, consisted of general courses in English, history and civics, chemistry, biology, physics, physiology and hygiene. These general courses were then followed by special courses particular to each area of study (Jones 1925:155-156).

The key characteristic of curricula in the better High Schools was that they were modelled after English schools. They taught a Cambridge syllabus and although they may not have been very imaginative, this is most likely what Africans themselves wanted (Beeby 1966: 30; Hastings 1994: 553; King 1971: 161). Quality was usually understood to denote the same sort of education deemed acceptable for their European masters.

Although Henry Venn, CMS secretary from 1842 to 1872, and others like him had promoted the idea of technical training as the means to developing an effective middle class in Africa (King 1971: 44), technical training was only slowly developed in Uganda. Mackay, one of the first CMS missionaries, had used his own technical expertise to begin teaching technical skills early in his ministry in Uganda (Rowe 2002), yet, the importance of technical training was more prominent in theory than in practice in most CMS schools. The Catholic missions took a greater interest in technical schooling. This was partially due to the Catholics' desire to enable mission stations to be as self-supporting as possible. Just as literary education developed out of the school for catechists, so technical training grew out of the mission buildings and the mission station (Oliver 1965: 213).

Following the Phelps-Stokes Commission Report, the government established a Department of Education in 1925 with Eric J. Hussey, the former chief inspector of schools in the Sudan, as Director of Education (Ssekamwa and Lugumba 1973: 5). The government also drastically increased its financial commitment to education from its pre-commission contribution of £15,000 in 1923 to £150,000 in 1925 (Hindmarsh 1966: 142). The new Department of Education quickly established the

first standardised grading of schools in Uganda as well. This began with the subgrade schools which were not required to conform to a government prescribed syllabus. Next, in ascending order, came the elementary vernacular schools which were required to follow the syllabus laid down by the government. Above these were the Intermediate Schools A and B. The Intermediate B schools were Kisubi, Budo, and Namilyango. Below them were the Central and High Schools, classed as Intermediate A. Separate from these were Special grade schools. These included technical and normal schools for the training of teachers. Finally, Makerere stood at the top of the grading system as the highest institution in the country, offering professional courses and the training of Intermediate School teachers (Ssekamwa and Lugumba 1973: 5-6).

The first twenty-five years of the century witnessed the establishment of a broad-based educational system in Uganda. It had begun to penetrate almost all districts of the country although the majority of schools remained in Buganda, central Uganda. The missions were firmly in control of the education system and by the end of this period were beginning to receive substantial grants from the government in order to facilitate them as the agents of education in the protectorate. It was only at the end of this period that the government itself became directly involved in providing education through the establishment of Makerere as the highest education institution. It also established a Department of Education and an inspection system for schools. The foundation was finally set upon which the country could build.

1926 – 1962

The years 1926 to 1962 were characterised by continued co-operation between the government and the missions in the provision of education. The government increased its control over education indirectly through tying grants to inspections of schools and by establishing several commissions to suggest recommendations for the education system as a whole. This period saw the entrance of the Muslim community into the educational arena as they began to set up primary schools (Hansen 2002a: 164-167). It also witnessed the continued growth of Makerere in both size and importance.

The Education Ordinance of 1927 brought the whole education system in Uganda under Government direction and control. However, the missions and churches remained as owners and managers of the schools. Hussey, the Director of Education, was a firm believer in vocational training. He attempted to turn the Central Schools into post-primary semi-vocational schools. These would offer a three or four year terminal course in vocational subjects. Yet, a coalition of both missionaries and Ugandan nationals felt that while vocational training was valuable it was an insufficient basis for the preparation of leaders. They opposed the idea and the experiment was abandoned soon after 1936 (Ssekamwa and Lugumba 1973: 6-9).

It was at the beginning of this period that the Roman Catholic missions began to realise that they would be disadvantaged if they lagged behind the Anglicans in the area of general education. At a conference of bishops in Dar-es-Salaam held in August 1928, the Apostolic Visitor ordered, "Collaborate with all your power; and where it is impossible for you to carry on both the immediate task of evangelisation and your educational work, neglect your churches in order to perfect your schools" (Oliver 1965: 275).

The language of schooling became an issue in 1930 with the suggestion by the Governor that Kiswahili be adopted for the purpose of elementary education. The Director of Education, Hussey, was a firm supporter of the move, arguing that Kiswahili would serve as a natural medium of communication across linguistic groups and territorial boundaries. Literature could be easily developed in the language and it would make reading more readily available to large parts of the population. However, others opposed the idea. Among them was E. M. Grace, the Headmaster of Budo, who believed that English served as the gateway to greater knowledge. Missionaries also opposed Kiswahili, fearing that it would facilitate the spread of Islam. In May 1931, the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Closer Union of Kenya and Uganda indicated that English would be the lingua franca of the future (Carter 1965: 195; Ssekamwa and Lugumba 1973: 10-11). The imprimatur of English took hold.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies appointed another commission in 1935 to report on higher education in the colonies. The commission, which interestingly had

no Ugandan representatives among its members, stressed the need to improve the whole educational system that fed higher education. It recommended an improved and expanded primary education, the improvement of secondary schools and the need for the government to start more secondary schools. It emphasised the need for a standardised East African School Leaving Examination which should be based on a syllabus suited in content to African conditions, yet maintaining a comparable standard to that of British Examining Bodies (Ssekamwa and Lugumba 1973: 15-16). One result of this was the reclassification or restructuring of the school system again in 1938. The system was simplified with a six-year primary school, a junior secondary of three years, and a senior secondary of another three years. Vocational education was to be provided by technical schools and was gradually phased out of secondary schools (Ssekamwa and Lugumba 1973: 10).

World War Two slowed the growth of the education system. However, the end of the war saw the Colonial Government become more directly involved in providing education by taking initiative where the missions either were not interested or had failed due to resource limitations. A telling statement revealing the government's approach to schooling at the close of the war was made by J. R. Cullen, the Director of Education. Prompted by war-time animosities in Europe, but exposing an ethno-centric approach to schooling, he explained that "those Europeans engaged in education should be capable of giving to Africans a proper understanding of British ways of life and thought and of training Africans in such ways" (Hansen 2002a: 168). Technical schools were developed with Kampala Technical Institute providing instruction in over fifty different kinds of technical skills, together with the required academic courses. The government also began secondary and technical schools in districts that had been insufficiently provided for in the past (Hindmarsh 1966: 145).

Another important player entered the educational scene in 1940 with the establishment of the Uganda Muslim Education Association. From 1948 onwards the government gave it the same recognition it afforded the Protestant and Catholic educational organisations (King et al. 1973: 24). There had been Muslim Quranic schools in existence since at least 1918 but these schools were for religious rather than general education. The first full Muslim primary school had been established in

1939 (Carter 1965: 194). Muslim education had suffered from several factors. Internally, the older and more conservative Muslims lacked interest in and even reacted strongly against what they considered to be Western education (Carter 1965: 194; Kasozi 1970: 7; King et al. 1973: 22). There was also substantial opposition to Muslim involvement in education by the Christians who feared the spread of Islam in Uganda (Carter 1965: 195). Many Muslims resisted going to Christian schools and by 1957 the educational situation of Muslims was so bad that the Annual Report of the Department of Education highlighted the “regrettably low standard of Muhammadan education in the protectorate.” By 1965, there was only one African Muslim university graduate in the whole country (Kasozi 1970: 1-2).

Another review of the state of education in Uganda was carried out by the de Bunsen Committee in 1953. This came just as the government was beginning to build its own secondary schools to stand alongside the mission schools in some parts of the country (Lugumba and Ssekamwa 1973:70). The de Bunsen Committee recommended primary schools should institute an eight year programme, which would be followed by four years of secondary education (Lugumba and Ssekamwa 1973: 71). However, this revision was never well established, with many schools setting up junior secondary I and II to follow the six years of primary school instead of extending the primary programme itself. Some urban primary schools did follow the de Bunsen recommendations, however, creating considerable confusion until the Education Commission of 1963 attempted to bring some form of standardisation, as will be seen (Uganda Government 1963: 5).

Finally, the years leading up to independence witnessed the continued expansion of Makerere from a Technical School to University College. In March 1929, Dar-es-Salaam hosted the annual conference of the British East African Directors of Education. The conference unanimously agreed that Makerere should serve as the centre for higher education in the territories. Makerere expanded to offer courses in medicine, elementary engineering, agriculture, surveying and teacher education. It also offered a general education programme that by 1935 led to a Cambridge School Certificate (Ssekamwa and Lugumba 1973: 15).

In 1938, the school came to be known as Makerere College, ceasing to be a senior secondary school and beginning the journey towards university status. In February 1949, the Makerere College Act provided for the independence of Makerere with a Council of fourteen members, under the chairmanship of Sir R. E. Robins. Interestingly, not a single African was a member of the ruling Council. Makerere became known as the University College of East Africa and the 200 students in attendance were able to read for external degrees of the University of London as of March 1950 (Ssekamwa and Lugumba 1973: 18-19; Ward and White 1971: 250-251). In 1953, it opened an Extra-Mural Studies Department which largely provided a non-vocational 'middle class' type of education for previously educated adults (Kwesiga 1975: 4, 27).

The years from 1926 up to independence in 1962 were characterised by government co-operation with religious groups in standardising and raising the level of education throughout Uganda. Government involvement through the Department of Education and through the inspection of mission schools was fundamental to this process. Makerere saw tremendous development as it moved from a simple Technical School to a University College serving all of East Africa.

The missions continued their influence in the development of Uganda through their schools. The churches trained the educated elite who were to become the first leaders of Uganda (Mutibwa 1978: 132). However, the church began to face the problem of finding the most educated graduates choosing political or secular professions instead of church ministry. Mission schools, which the church had originally started in order to train believers and church leaders, were now turning out professionals of high status while the clergy was recruited from among the more poorly trained people (Oliver 1965: 282-283).

In addition, despite the counsel of the Phelps-Stokes Commission, the curriculum in the schools remained very literary and Western. The Church of Uganda (COU), as heir to the mission schools that had been started by the CMS, makes this criticism itself in its centenary analysis.

Additionally, the missionary had not proved particularly innovative in adapting the system, its institutions and curricular to the needs of society and

the school environment. He had offered the best he knew of school in his own country. Unfortunately, however, it remained largely Western in orientation and puritanic in its attitude to things 'pagan.' ... In particular, the apparent neglect or discouragement of indigenous music, art, oral literature and other forms of native learning, were not taken lightly at the approach of nationhood and the realisation of the need for national and cultural identity (Wandira 1978: 84).

In spite of such comments, the resistance of Ugandans to an education which appeared different than or less than that obtained by Europeans must be recognised here. It cannot be said that efforts to make the curriculum relevant were never made (King 1971: 254), yet by the time of independence, the curriculum which Ugandans inherited was still very Western in nature. Although debate would continue, the language and curriculum, as established by 1962, would become the canon of post-independence society.

1962 – 1989

The educational system in black Africa is in a crisis because African societies themselves are in a crisis. It is not merely an economic crisis: the root cause lies no doubt in an inner schism, the failure to ensure autonomous self-perpetuation through a process of education whose content and methods alike are drawn from Africa and directed towards Africa, in other words through a process of 'endogenous' education (Ki-Zerbo 1990: 91).

Independence, which came on October 9, 1962, brought both high expectations and a raw awareness of the difficulties to be surmounted in developing an effective and authentic Ugandan system of education. Commissions were set up and parliamentary acts passed in an effort to tackle this important challenge for the new country. Yet, almost thirty years later, little of substance had changed and where change did occur, one could question if it had been for the best.

Within the first year of independence, the government established the Uganda Education Commission of 1963, headed by E. B. Castle. The Commission urged that the primary syllabus should undergo "drastic revision" with seven years of primary instead of the eight years then required. Post-primary education should consist of four different options. Four-year high schools would lead to a school certificate and then on to higher education. Three-year secondary schools would feed teacher training colleges and employment. Alternatively, one could attend four year farm

schools or technical schools (Uganda Government 1963: 7). These recommendations were implemented at the primary level. However, post-primary education took on a slightly different look with the option of four year secondary and technical schools or senior secondary which entailed a total of six years (Hindmarsh 1966: 146). Those completing senior secondary were able to proceed on to higher education if their marks were sufficiently high.

The 1963 Commission clearly highlighted the challenge of developing not only a structure but a curriculum and pedagogy that would be relevant to Uganda. Referring to the tendency for students to passively copy from a blackboard without actively listening to instruction, the report quoted Mr. Adiseshiah, the Assistant Director General of UNESCO, when he noted that “the complete waste and futility of the school programme for the African child and adolescent can only be seen to be believed ... and what I have seen is qualitative waste of the child’s mind and the breaking of his spirit” (Uganda Government 1963: 12). Concerning the difficulty of finding the right mix of curriculum and pedagogy, the Commission reported, “We do not suggest that in the social and family setting of this country we can merely import wholesale methods of teaching from other countries” (Uganda Government 1963: 12).

The Commission also revisited the language issue in schools, especially at the primary level. The members agreed that when possible, the first two years of primary should be in the vernacular. But the report went on to explain that where there is a lack of reading materials in the vernacular or where there is a mix of different vernaculars spoken by the students, this would not be possible. They considered the old question of using Kiswahili as the lingua franca, but rejected this on the grounds that it was “unacceptable to a very large majority of Ugandans.” Secondly, it was not seen to be adequate as an international language for higher education. The result was the recommendation that English should be taught and used as early as possible in primary school (Uganda Government 1963: 13-14).

The Commission also recommended that greater emphasis be placed on adult education. The efforts of the Extra-Mural Department of Makerere University College and of various voluntary social services were praised. It was recommended

that the government establish a National Advisory Council for Adult Education, which would serve to co-ordinate the activities of all the agencies engaged in providing adult education services (Uganda Government 1963: 71-72). In response, the Minister of Education set up a committee which recommended that the Extra-Mural Department should become the Centre for Continuing Education offering residential, mass-media and correspondence courses. These changes were implemented in 1967 (Extra-Mural Studies 1966: 8; Extra-Mural Studies 1967: 5-6).

At the same time, as the government was beginning to implement certain of these recommendations, it took the more radical step of considering placing all of the schools, including those of the voluntary agencies or missions, under the control of the Government of Uganda. This debate went on during 1963 and in 1964 the schools were actually taken over by the government.¹⁴ The government, of course, wanted to influence this powerful institution (education) in the nation to a greater degree. There was also apprehension that some schools were being used to support the opposition Democratic Party (DP) which was allied with the Catholic Church. Another major concern was that foreign ideologies and interests might be perpetuated through schools that were out of government control. It was also felt that central control would facilitate the standardisation of the curriculum. Finally, the increasingly significant government financial contribution to education was seen to legitimate increased government control (Nsibambi 1976: 60-61).

The Church of Uganda did not exhibit much resistance as the ruling party, the Uganda People's Congress (UPC), was closely allied to the Protestant Church, creating a feeling of confidence. There was resistance on the part of the Catholics, both as a result of doctrinal concerns and simply because they had the most to lose. Out of 2648 primary schools in Uganda at the time, 1168 were Catholic, 1081 were related to the COU, and 184 were Muslim (Nsibambi 1976: 64). Catholic resistance

¹⁴ Some of those who supported government control the most were cultural groups that had been dominated by the larger kingdoms under colonial rule. They hoped this government action would enable them to throw off the dominance of their overlords as well as to allay the sectarianism that might result from denominational control of schools (Cited in Nsibambi 1976: 73).

was especially strong in their Masaka stronghold, but the government's control was to prove to be too strong to resist in the end (Nsibambi 1976: 63-69).

Uganda faced a major hurdle in attempting to develop a system which would encourage and enable students to remain in the educational scheme long enough to really benefit from their education. Out of 1,000 potential pupils for intake into primary one, only about 650 would have joined in 1966. Of those 650, only 350 would finish six years of primary school. Only 110 of the 350 would qualify to continue in school and only 30 would continue on to senior secondary school. Only eight of those 30 would qualify for the last two years of senior secondary and perhaps four of those eight would go on to attend degree courses at university. (Hindmarsh 1966: 146-147).

In addition, there was the recurring problem of the curriculum, which continued to be patterned very closely after Western curricula. Castle wrote an article in *The Uganda Journal* two years after completing his Commission's report for the newly independent Government of Uganda. In it, he emphasised the dilemma faced by the curriculum. He commented that African culture by nature encourages an education which is more than just the written and spoken word. Instead, African education¹⁵ includes participation and activities as integral learning mechanisms; methods which were being recognised more and more by education experts as key ingredients in effective teaching and learning. Yet African parents and students themselves "furiously demand" the poorer Western type of curriculum which ensnares them in a much less effective educational system. He concluded by saying, "The penetration of the sacred by the secular has gone very deep in the western world; in Africa secularization is not merely the taking over of mission schools by secular governments but the casting out of reverence from African life" (Castle 1965: 58-59). Prewitt decries the inappropriateness of the curriculum as well.

Devised to conform to British standards and still heavily influenced by English values, the curriculum is strikingly empty of political content. ...The

¹⁵ Indigenous education, referred to here as African education, will be explored much more fully later in this thesis. It forms an essential theoretical and substantive aspect of this study.

teaching materials, authored almost exclusively by expatriates, convey the values of the Western world. They especially convey those values of colonizers and missionaries, groups representing two of the most conservative institutions in Western life – the church and the colonial administrative apparatus (Prewitt 1971: 161).

The educational challenges to independent Uganda were formidable and complex, but during the decade of the 1960s, the right questions were being asked and answers were being sought. All that was to change in the 1970s with the coming to power of Idi Amin.

Economic and educational progress not only ground to a halt, but even went into reverse during the regime of Idi Amin. Taking power through a coup d'état in 1971, Amin ruled dictatorially until 1979 when he was overthrown by an invading force of Ugandan exiles and military from Tanzania. The decade of the 1970s saw minimal investment in education and as the economy fell into ruin, education began to disintegrate. Two examples will serve to characterise the situation Uganda faced. First, the Church of Uganda, which had been set on a course of self-reliance nearly a century earlier by its first bishop, Bishop Tucker, began to question the feasibility of ever achieving such a lofty goal. In the Church's centenary history, compiled during Amin's regime, Tuma and Mutibwa, reflecting gloomily on the situation around them wrote, "It is certainly not possible to be self-reliant in education or medical work" (Tuma and Mutibwa 1978: 148-149). The years of dictatorial destruction had repercussions far beyond the obvious economic collapse of the country. Those citizens who had the greatest potential for renewing society began to lose hope and confidence that progress was indeed possible once again.

Makerere serves as another clear example of the devastation wreaked upon education during the Amin years. It is all the more appropriate as a case in point since, as the highest and most prestigious educational institution in the country, it continued to receive state assistance longer than some of the other parts of the education system that did not reflect as glaringly upon the government (Langlands 1976). In 1970, Makerere had become a fully-fledged university. Its prestige and reputation as a place of quality higher education was known throughout Africa, although it was still

“basically Western in its ethos and approach to intellectual training” (Mazrui and Tandon 1971: 174).

Langlands’ report to the Inter-University Council for Higher Education Overseas after he left Makerere in 1976 gives a bristling first hand account of the obstacles faced by a first rate university under dictatorship (Langlands 1976).¹⁶ He records the “lowering of morale and the silence of fear” that descended on the university as it struggled to maintain standards of excellence in the midst of severe financial restraints, government interference and loss of teaching faculty. Langlands’ comments reflect a mixture of distress and hope.

I think most staff are generally conscious that academic work is stagnating. The struggle is to ensure that something will remain from this wreckage and that sufficient of the university fabric will survive from which to rebuild again in better days (Langlands 1976: 16).

The decade ended with Amin being driven from power, but the first half of the next decade was characterised by continued political, economic and social instability. The devastation wrought under Amin would prove a difficult obstacle to remove from the path forward. The economy, the military, the political scene, the education system and the morale of the people were all in disarray. Uganda had lost many of her best minds either to the gun or to other countries where they had fled. Rebuilding was to prove very difficult. A series of short lived governments finally gave way to Obote’s¹⁷ return to power in December 1980, but this was accompanied by a new rebel movement led by Yoweri Museveni who was to come to power himself in 1986.

The second half of the 1980s saw the beginnings of renewed hope in Uganda. Stability gradually increased nation-wide and with it came the opportunity to rebuild the foundations upon which development could take place. The infrastructure of the

¹⁶ Langlands had been Dean of the Faculty of Arts and was associated with Makerere for almost twenty-three years.

¹⁷ Obote was Uganda’s first President.

country was in disrepair but these years witnessed the beginnings of its rehabilitation. However, educational renewal would have to wait for the last decade of the century.

The quality of education had begun to fall with the regime of Idi Amin and it continued its downward trend through the 1980s. School buildings were in disrepair, supplies were almost non-existent and the quality of teaching itself had fallen. It was not unusual to find classes and teachers in primary schools without a single textbook or syllabus. Teachers' salaries were unattractively low and were often paid several months in arrears. Morale and efficiency were at an all-time low. In 1988, 56% of primary school teachers were untrained (Murphy et al. 2002: 13). Forty percent of secondary teachers were either untrained or under-trained and even 20% to 25% of the tutors in teacher training colleges were not fully qualified (Kajubi 1991: 323-326). Kajubi's commentary on the character of Ugandan education at the end of the 1980s is enlightening.

Despite repeated criticisms of the inherited colonial system of education as anachronistic and irrelevant, and the efforts of successive governments to change it, no fundamental transformation has occurred over the years of independence in relating education to the social and cultural realities of Uganda.

Education has not succeeded; for example, in promoting a sense of national unity, economic development, self-reliance, social justice and equity, scientific and technological literacy, cultural values and a sense of mutual responsibility to a degree that society would like to see among the 'educated' class. On the contrary, formal schooling has focused mainly on academic learning for passing examinations *per se* to the neglect of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes needed to function efficiently in the real world of work (Kajubi 1991: 322).

1990 – 2000

With national rehabilitation well in progress, the Ugandan Government turned its attention to the education sector as one of its main priorities for the 1990s. The Education Policy Review Commission's report was published in 1992, entitled "Education for National Integration and Development". It was followed by a Report of the Curriculum Review Task Force in 1993. The end of the decade witnessed one of the most revolutionary changes ever proposed in the Ugandan education system with the implementation of Universal Primary Education (UPE) in 1997, in which

the government promised to provide free primary education for four children in every family. Education was finally moving forwards again.

Proposals made in the Education Policy Review Commission report of 1992 were less noteworthy for being revolutionary than they were for returning the education system to a sense of order and purpose. This was the first important commission since the 1960s to evaluate formally the state of education in Uganda and to make realistic recommendations for change. It recommended that primary schools should be increased once again to eight years instead of seven. The first four years would be taught in an indigenous Ugandan language while the second four would use English. It was also recommended that the curriculum be revised to include more practical or vocational courses during the second half of the primary phase. It recommended three years of ordinary secondary school, as either comprehensive or vocational secondary. Advanced level secondary would add another two years of academic studies (Uganda Government 1992: 10-12). The eighth year of primary and the reduction of ordinary secondary to three years were never implemented. Interestingly, the report recommended the establishment of Universal Primary Education (UPE) at this early stage and the government's response was positive, stating that UPE should be "accorded high priority," (Uganda Government 1992: 42), although implementation was not to be actualised for another five years. The current education system, then, consists of seven years of primary school followed by four years of ordinary level ('O level') secondary, which yields a high school certificate, and then a further two years of advanced level secondary which results in an advanced ('A Level') certificate. 'A levels' are a mandatory requirement for entry to a tertiary institution.

Adult education and the eradication of illiteracy were prioritised again by the government with the goal of developing functional adult literacy¹⁸ (FAL) and skills relevant to life in the community. The government sought to mobilise voluntary

¹⁸ Functional literacy refers to the basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy which enable the user to accomplish simple basic tasks associated with everyday life. Government programmes focused on functional adult literacy have been grouped into a government effort referred to as FAL in Uganda.

organisations and non-governmental organisations to assist in this endeavour. The recommendation was made that existing school buildings should be made available for formal and non-formal adult learning (Uganda Government 1992: 176-178). This actually began to happen on the ground in 1997 and 1998 as adults began to use classrooms for their own adult education courses when the children were not in school.

The government has also developed the Functional Adult Literacy Strategic Investment Plan (FALSIP). Linked to the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), FALSIP targets youth and adults 15 years of age and older, with particular emphasis upon women, the disabled, and the elderly. Its goal is to mobilise NGOs and government agencies for the purpose of empowering non-literate adults through the provision of functional adult literacy programmes so that they may “harness their potentials so as to contribute to poverty eradication and gender responsive sustainable development” (Uganda Government 2001: 14-15). The movement toward sector-wide approaches (World Bank 1999) provided the opportunity for donors to contribute to educational development through the Education Strategic Investment Plan (ESIP)¹⁹ under the Ministry of Education and Sports (Uganda Government 2000: 5.2). Interestingly, adult literacy and education are not a part of ESIP because they fall under a different Ministry,²⁰ thereby complicating the financing of adult education (Carr-Hill 2001: 5; Lauglo 2002).

Finally, the report of the Education Policy Review Commission (1992) raised, once again, the recurrent question of the use of Kiswahili in schooling. After an elaborate analysis of the importance of language both in learning and in promoting national unity, the government stated its position to be that both English and Kiswahili would be taught as compulsory subjects in primary and secondary levels. Kiswahili would

¹⁹ ESIP is the sector-wide approach for education, which enables various donors to contribute to common educational goals. Universal primary education has dominated ESIP with primary attention being given to the provision of classroom space, textbooks and the training and provision of teachers (Uganda Government 2000: 5.2).

²⁰ Ministry of Gender, Labour and Community Development.

be emphasised over time, especially at the primary level, as “the language possessing greater capacity for uniting Ugandans and for assisting rapid social development” (Uganda Government 1992: 19). Although the use of Kiswahili may have grown somewhat during the past decade, resistance by Ugandans themselves remains strong and English continues to be the actual language of education and business. The current primary school curriculum policy, states that P1 through P4 should be taught in the vernacular, with English and Kiswahili as subjects, while P5 through P7 should be taught in English with the vernacular and Kiswahili as subjects. The objective is to enable effective communication in English, while encouraging the use of the vernacular and Kiswahili as well (Uganda Government 1999b: 2-4).

The Curriculum Task Force submitted its report to the government in 1993. It can be characterised as promoting greater emphasis on the “acquisition of study and vocational skills and on development of healthy attitudes among the children rather than on factual knowledge” (Uganda Government 1993: 14). The Task Force pointed to the need for developing character and beneficial attitudes on the part of students more than drastically changing the curriculum itself (Uganda Government 1993:18).

The most far-reaching reform was the implementation of UPE in early 1997. Under this programme, the government pledged to provide free primary education to four children per family. Enrolment shot up tremendously under UPE as can be seen in Table 1.1 with over 6.5 million children enrolled in primary school in 2000.

Primary Enrolment				
95/96	96/97	97/98	98/99	99/2000
2,640,000	2,740,000	5,300,000	5,300,000	6,591,427

Table 1.1
(Uganda Government 2000: 5.2.2)

This entailed a whole new set of challenges as classrooms overflowed with students (World Bank 1997: 2). The government increased its contribution to primary

education by 30% from 1996 to 1998 (Elwana 2000). Primary education became the priority spurred on by the influence of the Education For All (EFA) movement begun at Jomtien, Thailand. This is evidenced in the increase in public expenditure on primary education from 49% to 62% as a percentage of total expenditure on education between the 95/96 and 99/2000 academic years (Uganda Government 2000: 5.2.2).

Retention of students remains a major hurdle in the education system, as explained in Uganda's report to the EFA conference in Dakar, Senegal in April 2000. The retention rates of such huge influxes of new students under UPE will not be known for some time yet, but the government is alert to the problem. The EFA report notes that "of the children who began primary school in 1986, 70% dropped out by 1992; and only 30 reached primary seven. Of those who passed primary seven only 25% were able to join the secondary school education cycle" (Uganda Government 2000: 6.5).

The prioritisation of primary education has had repercussions for other aspects of education, particularly adult education (Lauglo 2001: 12). The government states that although its Education Policy Review Commission (1992) report clearly outlined its objectives for adult education, many of these have not been able to be fulfilled due to the current emphasis being placed on primary education. The National Council for Non-formal and Adult Education which had been recommended by the Education Policy Review Commission (1992) was never organised (Uganda Government 2000: 5.5). The government's own assessment of adult education states, "The major problem is lack of co-ordination, lack of funds, poor motivation for instructors, inadequate education materials, and lack of facilities" (Uganda Government 2000: 60). It mentions that the number of spoken languages continues to complicate adult education and suggests introducing an adult education component in all training initiatives.

While primary education dramatically expanded in scope, at the other end of the spectrum tertiary education was also in a growth mode. Uganda liberalised tertiary education enabling the development of new universities. At the present, there are ten recognised universities, most of them in private or religious hands. Yet, Makerere

remains unrivalled as the premier tertiary institution in the country. Makerere now has eleven faculties and six related institutes. It has become a part of the African Virtual University and boasts an increasing number of students, more than doubling its student enrolment in the past five years. Cost-sharing enabled limited government funding to extend to more students, while fee paying students have also begun entering Makerere's programmes. This financial liberalisation and the University's substantial rehabilitation along with innovative efforts to address higher education demands in Uganda have been called the "quiet revolution" by David Court.

In the past seven years Makerere has moved from the brink of collapse to the point where it can again aspire to become one of the pre-eminent intellectual and capacity building resources in Uganda and the wider region (Court 2000: i).

Since 1990, the Government of Uganda has made tremendous efforts to improve the education system of the country. Although frustrated by the minimal tax base in a country where 80% of the population are farmers (many only at the subsistence level) (Black et al. 1999: 125) these efforts have necessitated the prioritisation of finances and objectives, with universal primary education becoming the rallying cry of the government. Meanwhile, the complete education system has been reordered and simplified, enabling increased clarity of vision regarding the way forward. Adult education has struggled to find its place during the 1990s (World Bank 1995: 89-90) with so much attention being given to primary education. Makerere, however, has begun to regain some of its shine once again and tertiary education has dramatically increased.

INSIGHTS FROM HISTORY

This historical review of the development of the state education system in Uganda yields insights into essential issues and hurdles that are particularly relevant to education in the Ugandan context. These issues influence general perceptions of education and learning as well as their contribution to or obstruction of the ownership of knowledge in Uganda.

First, it is evident that despite the sometimes heroic efforts of educators to provide education as broadly and universally as possible, there have always been significant

portions of the society that have been practically excluded from the benefits of literacy. Education gradually spread to encompass more and more of the population and the advent of UPE in 1997 has promoted the objective of providing basic literacy to all the children of Uganda. However, even UPE is not truly universal in that it provides education for only four children in every family (Uganda Government 1999a: 13).²¹ In addition, many Ugandans over the age of fifteen still have never attended school. A Uganda National Integrated Household Survey done in 1992-93 revealed that 28% of Uganda's population over the age of ten had received no formal education and 52.1% had not completed the seven years of primary school (Uganda Government 2000: 6.5). With current priorities focused on those beginning primary school, what will be the future for the majority of Ugandans over the age of ten who never completed primary school? How can they be offered the chance to achieve literacy? Moreover, how might their learning patterns differ from those who have finished primary school?

Secondly, the curriculum has been the topic of much debate and revision over the years, yet it remains a focus of criticism to the present. Despite numerous revisions, it remains very Western in character, accused of being too academic and irrelevant.

Africa is the only continent without a controlled system for collective self-perpetuation, the formal system of classroom education here looking more like a foreign cyst, a malignant tumor in the social body (Ki-Zerbo 1990: 89).

When innovative educational ideas have been proposed or attempted, they have been met by substantial resistance and suspicion. The desire for the "genuine European article" has precluded many potentially novel and effective educational developments (Hindmarsh 1966: 160). The government's EFA report of 2000 notes that recent attempts to focus learning on the practical acquisition of essential skills by primary students has had disappointing results as the curricula are not properly

²¹ The Uganda Government provides primary school fees for only four children per family. This serves at least three purposes. It enables children from each family to receive a primary education. At the same time, it supports the Government's efforts to create an awareness of the benefits of limiting family size. In addition, it facilitates government financial planning by placing an upper ceiling on the number of children per home that are the responsibility of the government.

implemented. It claims that most of the educational energy is targeted at examinable theoretical subjects instead of the practical application of knowledge (Uganda Government 2000: 7.5). This raises two pertinent questions. What can be done to facilitate the adoption of a curriculum that stimulates the use and formation of knowledge that is relevant to Ugandan society? How can the curriculum be taught so that it is both academically theoretical and practically effective?

Language has also been a recurring theme in the formative debates concerning Ugandan education. The benefits of the use of the vernacular have been in constant tension with the problems of inadequate literature materials in the vernacular and the multiplicity of vernaculars represented in many classrooms, especially in urban areas. Kiswahili has repeatedly been suggested, even as recently as 1992, as a potential lingua franca but resistance among the general population has been strong. Education in English remains alluring.

Literary as opposed to technical or agricultural education was ennobled and in this form it spread throughout Uganda. ...It became clear to the rest that the key to Ganda success was education, and the nature of education involved had long been decided. So Uganda schools proceeded to lay emphasis on education for the purpose of a decent job, which meant office job. This in turn reinforced greater emphasis on reading and writing English (Ocaya-Lakidi and Mazrui 1975: 288).

Hindmarsh succinctly presents the problem posed by language in Ugandan education.

English is the official language. But African languages are, in a very living sense, the repositories and matrices of African culture. English is the language of power, of commerce, of educational achievement; but the African languages are the vehicles for immediacy, for deep feeling and conviction (Hindmarsh 1966: 162).

English remains the language of choice, progress, and prestige in Ugandan education today. Its impact upon the development of discursive critical literacy, especially in adults with minimal formal schooling will be seen to be profound.

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Added to this Euro-centrism is a legacy of paternalism which has tended to create in Third World Christians, not so much an inferiority complex, as a

feeling of being regarded as inferior by Westerners. ...Where this occurred – or was perceived to have occurred – it was, in effect, a form of dismemberment; indeed one of the most serious forms of dismemberment – the stripping away of human dignity (Thompson 1997: 475).

ANGLICANS

Religious education in Uganda was actually the precursor of general education, as previously noted. For the first years of missionary work in Uganda, education was primarily centred upon the teaching of catechism to new believers. The pre-baptism course stressed the ability to read and write (Tuma and Mutibwa 1978: 97). The tremendous speed at which the church grew in Uganda made the need for church leaders and theological education all the more acute.

Leadership in the Anglican Church was needed urgently from almost the very beginning. In 1890, Bishop Tucker commissioned six Baganda men to work as lay evangelists. In 1893, another ten lay evangelists were commissioned and six men were ordained as deacons (Karugire 1978: 22-23). Three years later, in 1896, Bishop Tucker ordained the first Baganda priests. With such initial growth, it is amazing that more than fifty years later there was still no Ugandan bishop and relatively few Ugandan priests (Hastings 1979: 49).

A small divinity class was begun in Kampala and then moved out to Mukono, about 12 miles from Kampala, in 1913. Here the first Anglican theological college was built. The first buildings were simply mud and thatch. Its purpose was to prepare ordinands and lay readers for ministry, as well as to train primary school teachers (Hewitt 1971: 251). By 1916, a form of education had been developed for church leaders which required them to begin by doing practical church work under the oversight of regular evangelists. District councils would then select those who had proven themselves educationally and spiritually to be trained for a 'diocesan junior certificate.' The next step involved entrance into the 'Theological Hall' and finally doing the theological course of the Holy Orders which lasted for two years (Stock 1916: 90-91).

Mukono became the centre for theological education among Anglicans. The Phelps-Stokes Commission commented that, upon their visit to Uganda in 1924, Mukono

had a staff of two Europeans and four or five African teachers. By this time the main building was being completed in permanent building materials (Jones 1925: 157). But the tremendous demands upon missionaries which pulled them in many diverse directions and the ever growing burden of the general school system, which was in the hands of the missionaries as well, resulted in a lack of continuity in theological education. Some of the missionaries assigned as teachers lacked the necessary skill and gifts to be effective and others were either distracted or re-deployed before they were able to effectively establish theological education at the school. Finally J. C. Jones was able to develop a greater sense of vision and purpose at Mukono and others, like J. V. Taylor, were able to build on this foundation in the 1940s (Hewitt 1971: 252).

While great attention was given by the missionaries to get a small elite through the Cambridge School Certificate, comparatively little attention was given to the development of theological education. The clergy were not being given positions of authority as quickly and were not being educated as highly as teachers and graduates of other mission schools. As a result, the status attributed to the clergy fell while at the same time they were unable to achieve status through promotion within their field of work (Hansen 1984: 253; Hastings 1994: 555). In 1922 Bishop Willis commented that the low educational level of the clergy often meant they would be “below the present educational standard of many of the boys and girls in their congregations” (cited in Hansen 1984: 253). The quality of theological education did not keep up with the quality in other mission schools.

In addition, it is evident that theological education was not synonymous with creative theological reflection. In fact, the nature of theological training was quite restrictive. The goal was the acquisition of knowledge which was already in its complete form and only needed to be transferred. Little was expected or offered with respect to creativity (Oosthuizen 1972: 330-331; Walls 1996: 139). Certainly different missionaries approached training from different perspectives and thinking changed over time. Yet, the words which R. H. Walker, a CMS missionary, wrote in 1913 are striking. “The Baganda are not abstract thinkers, and to formulate afresh for themselves their own articles of belief would be a task beyond them as it would be

unnecessary” (Cited in Oosthuizen 1972: 331). In fact, the statement of faith of the Church of Uganda during this same period stated,

The Church of Uganda doth hold and maintain the doctrine and sacraments of Christ as the Lord hath commanded in His Holy Word, and as the Church of England hath received and explained the same in the Book of Common Prayer, in the form of manner of making, ordaining and consecrating of bishops, priests and deacons, and in the XXXIX articles of religion, and further it disclaims for itself the right of altering any of the aforesaid standards of faith and doctrine (Cited in Oosthuizen 1972: 330-331).

While the church was growing numerically, much of it a result of the efforts of Ugandan evangelists, its Ugandan leadership was being tightly controlled by the CMS missionaries. Creative theologising was not encouraged and opportunities for advancement and development were limited. Consequently, the best students chose to enter the teaching profession or other professional occupations instead of entering the ministry. This, in turn, was compounded by the CMS policy of encouraging self-financing in the Church of Uganda, which meant that the clergy were poorly paid while school teachers’ salaries were higher, being supplemented by government grants to the schools.

ROMAN CATHOLICS

The Catholics had a very different approach to training their clergy. They were much slower to become preoccupied with general schooling, preferring instead to focus their initial educational energies on the development of church leaders. Yet, their commitment to theological education did not necessarily mean a commitment to Africanised theological training. The Catholic Church faced many obstacles which were doctrinal in nature and therefore were not open to compromise or adjustment.²² Yet Rome had insisted that “a mission that can produce martyrs can produce priests” and before the turn of the century, Mgr. Hirth and Mgr. Streicher had begun seminaries (Hastings 1994: 473).

²² Such as the commitment to celibacy and the use of Latin.

The first seminarians were for the most part chosen by Catholic chiefs and some of them were actually the chiefs' sons. In order to make theological education possible, many books needed to be produced in both Luganda and Latin. In 1912, the *Lexicon Latinum Ugandicum*, all 632 pages of it, was printed at Bukalasa. What had seemed incomprehensible began to take shape in 1913, when 15,000 people witnessed the ordination of Victor Mukasa and Bazilio Lumu, the first two Ugandan priests. By 1920 there were ten of them, with many more on the way (Hastings 1994: 473).

When the Phelps-Stokes Commission toured Uganda, they recorded their visits to the 'little seminary' at Bukalasa and the 'grand seminary' at Katigondo. They were impressed by the European Fathers' thorough knowledge and understanding of the Ugandans' way of life as well as the extensive publishing they had done in Luganda and Latin, having produced grammars, an history of the Buganda Martyrs, as well as books of geography, arithmetic, science and history (Jones 1925: 161). The following excerpt from the Commission's report reveals the rigour and depth of education demanded of seminarians at Bukalasa.

The sixth form (first year) is the foundation stone. The students do not begin Latin, but are taught, in the vernacular, grammar, arithmetic, geography, history. They learn to reflect and to think by parsing and analysis. Teaching of Latin includes Morphology (fifth form), Syntaxis of words (fourth form), Syntaxis of sentences (third form), Revision of the whole grammar (sixth form), Rhetoric (first form), with numberless exercises. Manual training and athletics are provided every day (Jones 1925: 161).

Such an education was very advanced and extensive. While most Protestant seminaries across Africa were generally three or four years in length, Catholic seminaries were at least seven (Hastings 1979: 111). Catholic seminarians underwent rigorous study equivalent to anything offered in other schools. The 'foreign' nature of its Latin concentration was partially balanced by beginning instruction of relatively complex subjects in the vernacular. The principles learned there were later carried over into the Latin instruction.

The Catholic Church soon began ordaining Ugandan clergy in greater numbers than the Anglicans. Henri Streicher, the first Catholic bishop of what later became the Masaka Diocese, was an influential proponent of developing Ugandan Church

leaders. Chosen as bishop in 1897, he led his vicariate for the next thirty-six years. During this time, the number of Catholic Christians mushroomed from 30,000 to 303,000. Under his leadership, forty-six priests were ordained and a sisterhood with 280 members was established along with an order of teaching brothers. Significantly, he sent two Baganda priests to Rome to study and they returned as the first African doctors of canon law. In 1939, while Streicher was still alive and able to witness it, Joseph Kiwanuka, one of the priests he had sent to Rome, became the Bishop of Masaka. He was the first Catholic African bishop and would remain so for another 12 years. It should be noted that at this time, there were similarly no African Anglican bishops (Hastings 1979: 565-572).

Independence would witness increased Ugandan leadership in both the Anglican and Catholic Churches as the political climate stimulated greater autonomy in the churches as well. Changes were not as significant in the theological schools, however, as curricula continued to be tied very much to the traditional Western pattern (Beetham 1967: 106). European missionaries continued to teach, often maintaining very influential posts. In October 1972, Idi Amin announced plans to "Ugandanize the churches." He followed this by expelling 55 Catholic priests for not holding valid entry permits in December of the same year (Hastings 1979: 194). This was a further impetus, again stimulated by the political situation, to encourage the churches to take greater responsibility for their own development. The door was opening, ironically, under Amin's oppression for the church to begin forging her own way. While the events of the 1970s fundamentally changed the churches' perceptions of themselves, equivalent fundamental changes in theological development were minimal.

The Catholic and Anglican Churches took significantly different approaches to the development of their clergy. The Anglicans were hesitant to loosen the reins of authority and lost their best-educated members to secular professions. However, the Catholic missionaries produced a demanding and rigorous theological education programme and began promoting Ugandans into key positions of leadership much earlier. Neither of the theological curricula were particularly adapted to the Ugandan

context; however, the extensive vernacular work and teaching done in the Catholic Seminaries may have helped to counter-balance the Euro-centric tilt.

While “the movement to spread Christianity was successful because it was indigenous” (Pirouet 1969: 37) this has not been the case in theological education. Although progress has been made on some fronts in developing a more Ugandan-centred system of theological education, it cannot be said that any real breakthrough has yet been achieved.

BAPTISTS

The coming of independence in 1962 was accompanied by the influx of missionaries from many new Christian denominations. These churches were not new in the sense of being recently organised, some of them had been in existence about as long as the Anglican Church, but they were new to Uganda.²³ This was at the same time as the older missionary societies were struggling to fill gaps in their ranks (Hastings 1979: 159).

Most of these recent arrivals were theologically conservative from evangelical Protestant churches from America. While the CMS was focused on education, these new missions were geared toward evangelisation. Very few Protestant churches, other than the COU, had managed to enter Uganda before 1960 (Hansen 2002a: 167-173). Among those that did were the Seventh-day Adventists in 1926, the Salvation Army in 1931, and the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada in 1935. However, by 1970 another 13 denominations had begun working in the country (Barrett 1982: 687). Among them were the Conservative Baptists (CB), arriving in 1961 and the Southern Baptists (SB) in 1962.

Church planting through evangelism was the primary objective of these Baptist missions during the 1960s. An informal agreement was made between them resulting in the Conservative Baptists working in Kampala and to the west, while the

²³ The SBs first attempted to enter Uganda in 1957. They were rebuffed by the Governor after the Anglican bishop expressed his opposition (Hansen 2002a: 171).

Southern Baptists worked primarily in eastern Uganda. The Baptist missions' ministry was truncated by the arrival of Idi Amin in power. In September of 1973, he expelled all CB missionaries from the country and all but a couple of the SBs left as well before any formal theological education had been started. Amin then demanded that all the Baptist churches in the country unite into one fellowship. The two groups of Baptists met together and agreed to form the Baptist Union of Uganda. Interestingly, just as had happened with the Anglican and Catholic Churches, political forces caused this major change in the church structure. Shortly thereafter, in September of 1977, Amin banned 27 religious organisations, the BUU among them. The COU and the Catholics were not affected by this ban, but did experience other forms of persecution during the Amin regime.

The persecution experienced by the Baptists during the Amin years was a formative experience for the young church. Many of the small churches collapsed. However, those that remained, often meeting incognito and fellowshiping with the Church of Uganda, grew in strength. Amin's expulsion in December of 1979 was accompanied by the return of religious freedom. The remaining Baptist congregations were fewer and smaller than they had been in the 1960s but there was a new dynamism about them and growth was exponential. During the 1980s and 1990s there were several years in which the Baptists experienced growth of 20% per year.

The BUU requested the CB and SB missions to return to help them as they re-established themselves under such growth conditions. When the missionaries returned, they made two fundamental changes in their approach to ministry. First, they agreed to work co-operatively instead of separately with the BUU. This was with the desire to facilitate the unity of the Baptists in Uganda, rather than to duplicate American divisions. Secondly, mission priorities included leadership training and theological education. There have been seven major approaches used to theological education among the Baptists since 1980. These range from individualised informal training to institutional formalised education.

The missions' first attempts at establishing theological training took on two forms. First, personal discipleship was practised almost universally. This was similar to apprenticeships in that potential leaders would travel with and learn from older

leaders, whether Ugandans or expatriate missionaries, receiving academic and practical learning congruently. The second form consisted of the establishment of 'Association Bible Schools.' These were very similar to the old Anglican and Catholic 'bush schools' in every respect. They were taught in the vernacular, but staffing was irregular, as was attendance. The schools would try to meet when people were not working in their fields or harvesting. Instead of using a set curriculum or syllabus, teachers taught whatever they felt capable of teaching. The result was low morale and the eventual closure of most of these schools.

The missions worked jointly to develop a Theological Education by Extension scheme throughout the country. This entails the use of a workbook which takes the student through a daily programmed study to be done at home. Each week, a tutor meets with the students of a certain area, usually within walking distance, to lead them in a discussion of what they have studied and to respond to any questions they may have. The materials, in English, Kiswahili, and some vernacular languages as well, were co-written by Africans and Western missionaries. The major obstacles have been maintaining motivation levels and the apparent lack of prestige accorded to this form of study.

The SBs established the Uganda Baptist Seminary (UBS) in Jinja as the 1980s drew to a close. The Board consists of both missionaries and Ugandans, but the Principal and Academic Dean are Americans. It is semi-residential, allowing students (primary seven leavers or above) to come to the seminary and attend classes for three weeks after which they return to their homes and churches to practise and to read materials in preparation for the next course. The materials are in English and were written and compiled in the West. The seminary is substantially subsidised by the SBs.

The CBs established two different theological schools. The first was a co-operative effort with several churches in Kampala to form the Kampala Evangelical School of Theology (KEST). The school is responsible to a Board which is made up of respected African Church leaders. The Director of KEST is an African as well. KEST is a tertiary institution, emphasising flexible class schedules for working adults.

The second school is Western Uganda Baptist Theological College (WUBTC) and is located in the Kasese District. Begun in 1990, it offers a two year residential theological course in either Kiswahili or English leading to a certificate. The only academic prerequisites are the ability to read and write either Kiswahili or English and the ability to pass an interview which primarily examines past experience in church ministry and the student's objectives for pursuing further study. Both men and women are welcomed as students and if married, their spouse must accompany them and attend a separate simpler course of study. The curriculum has been developed jointly by missionaries and Ugandan teachers, but is very Western in character. The Board of Governors and the director of the college are all Ugandans. WUBTC is self-financing, which has resulted in the need for fiscal restrictions, yet it has simultaneously developed a sense of pride in the knowledge that this college really belongs to the BUU.

Another development in Baptist theological training began at a church leaders' retreat in May of 1996. The meeting was prompted by a sense of general frustration with the ineffectiveness and outright collapse of many education programmes for church leaders. It resulted in the appointment of four Ugandans and two missionaries to develop and write a new curriculum which would accompany a novel strategy designed and outlined by the retreat participants. This was to be called the Local Bible School (LBS).

It was an attempt to make very basic theological education available to the most rural and least educated church leaders around the country. The objective was to facilitate decentralisation through a short eight-week theological programme that could be taught in flexible segments almost anywhere. The development team put together a detailed syllabus which provided basic content and suggested questions for teaching in one-hour units. The syllabus consisted of nine distinct courses. Balance in content and presentation was stimulated by deciding that if the writer of a particular course was an Ugandan, a missionary served as editor and vice versa. Since 1997, the LBS has expanded nation-wide.

Interestingly, although all of those who were trained to teach the LBS had graduated from other theological programmes, many found this basic LBS material to be new

for them. Some of them also found it very difficult to read and understand the material themselves so that they could present it to others. It became apparent that this was not a skill they had mastered. Conversely, the Ugandans who had helped to write and develop the LBS syllabus developed tremendous self-confidence and ability to organise, formulate and teach theological materials.

This review of seven different attempts at theological education within the Baptist Union of Uganda reveals a convoluted picture of partial successes and complete failures. Yet, several observations can be made as a result of this historical overview. First, it is apparent that the successful completion of a programme of theological training is not necessarily accompanied by the ability to understand, organise and use information which the graduate will encounter in the future. Second, most of the curricula which have been used in Uganda are very Western in nature, having been either written by missionaries or adopted from Western sources. Third, the greater the involvement of Ugandans from the earliest stages of planning through to the development of curricula and the leadership of the institutions or programmes, the greater the probability of success.

CONCLUSION: QUESTIONS FROM HISTORY

This review of the history of education in Uganda raises as many questions as it answers. Interestingly, some of the same problems or issues are recurrent in both the state system and theological education. Among these, three areas of controversy and concern stand out in importance. First is the bias towards Euro-centrism or Western orientation in the curriculum. Second, the thorny problem of language has been rehearsed repeatedly. A third issue is the tension-filled interface between orality and literacy. These potentially influence the learner's ability to effectively use and formulate knowledge in a genuinely authentic manner.

Predominantly Western formulations of the curricula in use in Uganda have repeatedly raised the question of relevancy and effectiveness, yet, the Western influence remains. The well-known Kenyan author, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, voiced his concern that the world as defined by the European experience of history continued to influence African learners long after political independence, stating, "Their entire

way of looking at the world, even the world of the immediate environment, was Eurocentric. Europe was the centre of the universe” (Ngugi 1986: 93). Christian missionaries taught new converts and future church leaders to read and write using the method that was best known to them, which was essentially Western. Yet, as the Nigerian theologian, Bolaji Idowu, comments,

By a certain miscarriage of purpose, however, their effort succeeded not only in enlightening, but also in enslaving the mind, inasmuch as it inculcated that the only way to human dignity and full-grown personality was to be in everything like Europeans and to despise their own culture (Idowu 1965: 4-5).

Idowu accepts that such a Western presentation may not have been purposively promoted, nevertheless, it was communicated very powerfully. In addition, as mentioned previously, Africans themselves resisted most attempts to develop or introduce curricular approaches which might have been far less Western in orientation. Still, dissatisfaction with the dominant Western approach was always just below the surface, giving rise to movements such as the Young Baganda Association and schisms within the churches, which resulted in the development of independent church movements (ter Haar 2000: 13-14). Barrett suggests that many of these movements were the result of a “striving for cultural integrity and spiritual autonomy” (Barrett 1968: 95).²⁴

Frustration bubbled to the surface in a meeting of the All Africa Conference of Churches in 1974 when the assembly called for a moratorium on external assistance in money and personnel. The assembly went on to say, “We recommend this option as the only potent means of becoming truly and authentically ourselves while remaining a respected and responsible part of the Universal Church” (Hastings 1979: 225). Judging from the actions taken by individual church leaders once they returned

²⁴ The independent church movement has become an increasingly important part of the religious landscape of Uganda. Theological education in the independent churches tends to consist of periodic seminars where effective pastors share how they have succeeded with others. However, this study addresses the ownership of knowledge in curricular and institutional ‘formalised’ education programmes. A study of the ownership of theological knowledge among the independent churches would be a valuable future contribution to the findings of this study. For further reading, one might note: Appiah-Kubi (1979). See also Barrett (1968) and van Dijk (2000).

to their respective countries, this was more a clarion call that the African Church be heard and respected than an actual request for a moratorium on missionaries and assistance. Yet, the message was clear. The church in Africa needed to construct her own identity historically, culturally and theologically. 'Re-membering' (restoring dignity and identity) needed to happen (Thompson 1997). Although the church in Africa is expanding rather than contracting as in Europe, it is still in search of its own identity (Bediako 1996: 60). An important step in that process is to locate theological education firmly within the context, psyche, and life of the African Church. Kwesi Dickson, an eminent Ghanaian theologian, says that "theological education in Africa has generally had the effect of producing theologians who are more at home in Western theological thought, even if such thought pertains only to a certain level of their consciousness" (Dickson 1984: 3). African theologians are players in the "Christian laboratory of the world" (Bediako 1996: 56), but the 'world' is often more prominent than Africa.

The second historically recurring issue is the problem of which language should be used in instruction. Educational leaders in Uganda have repeatedly debated the pros and cons of using the vernacular, Kiswahili, or English. It has often been suggested that effective, relevant learning is best facilitated by using the vernacular. However, the limited literature available in most vernaculars, the presence of learners representing multiple vernaculars in a single classroom, and the cost of developing vernacular materials has limited its use except in the first years of schooling. Kiswahili is commonly used as a trade language throughout much of East Africa and there is some literature already produced in Kiswahili throughout the area. However, the majority of Ugandans have a deep-seated antipathy towards Kiswahili for many different reasons with the result that it has never gained sufficient respectability in Uganda to be used effectively in education.²⁵ The dominance of English as an international language and the tremendous volume of English literature have resulted in its use as the language of choice for educational purposes.

²⁵ For instance, Kiswahili is often associated with the army.

As long ago as 1924, the Phelps-Stokes report noted the immense value of the vernacular “in that it is one of the chief means of preserving whatever is good in Native customs, ideas and ideals, and thereby preserving what is more important than all else, namely, Native self-respect. All peoples have an inherent right to their own language” (Jones 1925: 19). Yet the report went on to state that as a rule, Africans were eager to learn a European language, perceiving it to be their ticket to new opportunities and knowledge (Jones 1925: 20). Ngugi writes,

Language as culture is the collective memory bank of a people’s experience in history. Culture is almost indistinguishable from the language that makes possible its genesis, growth, banking, articulation and indeed its transmission from one generation to the next (Ngugi 1986: 15).

If language truly is such a rich and important repository of knowledge and culture, its use or neglect in education and especially in the kind of education that leads to the formation of knowledge is a major concern. Language is influence. Brock-Utne notes the British Council Annual Report of 1983 as stating that although Britain no longer has the economic or military might to impose its will in other parts of the world, British influence endures through the “insatiable demand for the English language,” which, it maintained, was Britain’s greatest asset (Brock-Utne 1993: 42).²⁶ English remains entrenched as the language of education in Uganda, but the questions have not gone away.

The third major issue raised by this historical study is the dynamic situation that arises from the interface between orality and literacy. Education brought the book, the written word, into the predominantly oral cultures of Uganda. Ngugi notes the irony of the fact that even after independence, the proponents of a Euro-centric literacy in Africa were in “countries where the oral tradition, the basis of all genres of written literature be it a poem, a play, or a story, was beating with life and energy, and yet they were unaffected by the surging creative storm all around them” (Ngugi 1986: 93).

²⁶ It might be argued that North America exerts a greater world influence than Britain on the use of English.

Christian missionaries came with the scriptures, the written word of God. They immediately began to translate them in vernacular languages and to teach new converts to read. Biblically-based Christianity demanded literacy and theological education promoted the importance of the written word. Western theologising is literacy-based whereas traditional spirituality in Uganda was orally-based. Mbiti highlights the disjuncture between these two:

First, written African theology is the privilege of a few Christians who have had considerable education and who generally articulate their theological reflections in articles and books, mostly in English, French, German or other European languages. Second, oral theology is produced in the fields by the masses, in African languages, through song, sermon, teaching, prayer, conversation, and the like. It is theology in the open air, often unrecorded, often heard only by small groups and audiences, and is generally lost as far as libraries and seminaries are concerned (Mbiti 1986: 46).

Mbiti's call for the recognition of oral theology as well as written theology²⁷ is an important attempt to reconcile the tension which continues to this day as literacy unrelentingly invades the realm of orality in Uganda. This interplay between literacy and orality will be examined more fully in the following chapters.

The three recurrent historical problems expose a fourth. It is the problem of how to facilitate the ability to effectively use and formulate knowledge in a genuinely authentic manner. Rote learning and the acceptance of the Western standard in education has stymied the potential inherent within African indigenous education and learning to contribute to and improve upon education as a whole. The appropriation of knowledge rather than the formulation of knowledge is often the norm. Knowledge continues to be seen as something that comes from somewhere else and belongs to someone else, needing to be assimilated as quickly as possible.

These insights from history give rise to important questions that demand further research. What can be done to lessen the Westernisation of the curriculum while still maintaining its acceptability and respectability in Uganda? Are there principles or

²⁷ Mbiti also refers to "symbolic theology" which includes such things as drama, rituals and art (Mbiti 1986: 46).

methods from Ugandan indigenous education that might assist in developing greater Ugandan authenticity in the curriculum? Is English really the best language to be used in education? How much does the choice of English influence the ability of learners to think discursively and critically? Does the use of English facilitate or frustrate the authentic formulation and development of knowledge? What can be done in theological education to capitalise upon the dynamic tension between oral and written theology, instead of demanding the demise of the one in favour of the other? How can Ugandans be prepared and enabled through theological education to develop and formulate theological knowledge themselves?

The orientation of the curriculum, the choice of language, and the interface between literacy and orality all feed and determine the final problem; the ownership and formulation of knowledge. History clarifies the real questions that plague theological education in Uganda today. Whose language should be used? Whose curriculum organises knowledge? Whose voice is to be heard? Whose knowledge counts? These are questions of ownership.

The following chapter examines how the positioning of adult education within the greater education framework in Uganda has the potential to address and influence these important issues concerning ownership. A review of adult education theory, global influences and local practice reveal the primary roles that orality and literacy play in the production, manipulation and ownership of knowledge.

Chapter Two

ORALITY AND LITERACY: POSITIONING ADULT THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION FOR IMPACT

Position is critical for maximising impact. Effective positioning depends on a clear understanding of the cultural, political, motivational and linguistic criteria relevant to adult education within a particular context. This chapter examines these criteria in light of the recurrent historical concerns elicited in chapter one.

Educators in the field of adult education have espoused varied and sometimes conflicting views about the locus of adult education within the broader field of education studies. Some proponents of adult education, particularly those who adopt a radical or popular view of such education, claim that it should stand as a counterpoint to generally recognised formal education, in order to facilitate radical critique and transformative learning. Others suggest that it should stand alongside of the formal education sector, serving as a complementary avenue of personal educational advancement for adults who desire specific further training or who have been bypassed by the education system. Put simply, the question is whether it should serve to complement the formal education system or whether it should stand in opposition to it, offering a radically different form of education both in terms of its philosophical underpinnings and its educational approach. This chapter will examine the efficacy of theological education conforming to the requirements of either, both or neither of these approaches.

Some proponents of adult education, such as Freire and Macedo, have emphasised its divergence over its convergence with formal education (Freire and Macedo 1987; Freire and Macedo 1999). Doing so enables them to elaborate upon the unique approaches to education which the adult context elicits. It facilitates the clarification of the different needs, aims, and motivations for study among adults. This has also led to the adoption of a relevant vocabulary which highlights the contrast with formal education, such as ‘non-formal education,’ ‘informal education,’ ‘training,’ ‘participatory education,’ and ‘popular education’. Whereas ‘formal education’ represents the purposive pursuit of knowledge as presented in a recognised and

standardised curriculum, 'non-formal education' is outside of the formal standardised curriculum and often focuses on particular skills and interests. 'Informal education' is not planned but occurs in the natural course of life's work, experience, and in the solving of every day problems. 'Training' usually conveys the learning of specific skills. However, training is not limited to instrumental value since individuals may use it as the basis for or as a part of their wider education experience (Rogers 1992: 5). 'Participatory education' emphasises pedagogical difference while 'popular' or 'radical' education implies a difference in political agenda, often emphasising education for citizenship. "A long-standing observation about popular education is that it transforms people from passive subjects to active citizens" (Lauglo 2001: 17). This transformative effect resonates with the acclaimed purpose of Christianity; the transformation of people who then transform their world. In this respect, the ownership of knowledge in theological education should be transformative.

Whether in the form of vocational skills training, literacy training or the more revolutionary struggle against oppression of Paulo Freire, the field of adult education has become an increasingly important domain within education as a whole. The working group on non-formal education, which is a part of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), seeks to keep the agenda of adult education for development in the forefront of education in Africa (ADEA 1999: 49). "The demand among the adult population for opportunities to learn has grown to a critical level. ...A silent revolution in education is now in the making" (Belanger 1996: 20).

One would expect to begin hearing glowing reports of adult education successes, considering the extensive growth in adult education theory, the particular interest which it has generated in the context of the 'developing' world and the participation of organisations such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Bank. Whether success is determined in respect to adults' increased contribution to the economic growth of 'developing' or 'Southern' nations or rather in terms of the growth of creative restructuring of traditional perceptions of education and knowledge, the returns seem somewhat mixed (United Nations Development Programme [UNDP] 2001; World Bank 1997: 1; World Bank 2002: 1).

Education, including adult education, is sometimes perceived of as being ineffective because it is seen as an investment in 'human capital' with poor developmental and economic returns. Education then may be seen as being of poor quality or of the wrong type (World Bank 1996: 199). However, people are more than simple cogs of 'human capital' in the economic machine.

Popular adult educators resist being reduced to simply servicing the economy. They maintain the objective of "enabling people to develop to their full potential as 'whole persons' or rounded human beings" (Martin 1999b: 7). Education must recognise both the distinctively human value in learning as well as the instrumental or utilitarian value accrued to society (Muller 1973: 7). However, as Bray et al. note, "education reflects society more than it shapes it, and ... this has been realised too rarely both by educationists and non-educationists" (Bray et al. 1986: 178). Theological education in Uganda must position itself strategically to make the greatest impact possible, if it is to be truly transformative, both personally and societally, as individuals and communities experience change internally and exert change externally through knowledge formation.

This chapter will address the issue of the positioning of adult theological education within the broader educational context, through an examination of essential issues within the Ugandan context. It will begin by tracing some of the major philosophical presuppositions that underpin such terms as 'schooling', 'training', and 'learning'. Secondly, the influence of both form and policy in the political arena will be addressed as it affects what is understood to be the proper and acceptable roles of adult education in society. This will focus particularly on the situation in Uganda. Thirdly, the conceptualisation and transmission of knowledge, how it is organised into curricula and the impact of globalisation upon that process will be evaluated in light of its influence on the positioning of adult education. This will be followed by an examination of the motivation on the part of adult learners to obtain credentials, as it clearly influences the recognition either attributed or denied to adult education schemes.

The influence of culture and indigenous knowledge upon learning will then be reviewed with particular attention being given to how culture, knowledge and

cognitive processes influence learning patterns and styles. Emphasis will be placed upon the role of indigenous knowledge and education in Uganda and their effect upon the development of adults and adult education.

The examination of these components will expose the essential role which orality and literacy play in the processing, development and ownership of knowledge. The infusion of literacy into orality creates a dynamic learning environment that influences all aspects of adult theological education in Uganda. It is suggested that in order for theological education in Uganda to be transformative, it must position itself strategically in recognition of these essential elements which may either enable or frustrate the ownership of knowledge.

ADULT THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION: SCHOOLING, TRAINING OR LEARNING?

The terms ‘schooling’, ‘training’ and ‘learning’ have vied for influence and dominance in debates about the education of adults. The term ‘school’ or ‘schooling’ is usually tied conceptually to the formal education of children, although it may also be used to portray ‘formalised’ education. Training focuses on the development of knowledge and skills for a particular use. Learning emphasises the process through which knowledge and skills are developed. Adult education incorporates all of these concepts in varying degrees, depending on its purpose. It may and does clearly provide access to knowledge, skills or qualifications missed earlier in the adult’s life. However, it may also include a more radical or popular approach, seeking to be transformative by enabling the development of critical thought which seeks to act upon and fundamentally alter the accepted status quo.

The conceptualisation of adult education as ‘popular’ has been deeply influenced by Freire’s description of it as the development in people of a “critical consciousness which would result from their intervention in the world as transformers of that world” (Freire 1972: 47). Such education enables one to intervene in the world and so to transform it. It is not just a matter of having scripted places into which each person must fit in society and for which education shapes individuals, therefore maintaining the status quo. Rather, popular adult education enables people to

interact dynamically with their world, learning from it and transforming it into something new and better.²⁸ This has led to the vision of adult education as a revolutionary and humanising force in society.

Paulo Freire's thoughts and writing are particularly poignant in reference to adult education in the developing world since it was within this world that his own concepts and paradigms were forged.²⁹ Although Freirean thought has been scrutinised and modified over the years, his influence remains. The concern for social justice and personal development in addition to instrumental value is reflected in the statement, "The ultimate goal should be the creation of a learning society committed to social justice and general well-being" (Hamburg Declaration 1997: 256).

Training, on the other hand, may be seen as the preparation of adults to do something. It entails the learning of knowledge and skills for specific tasks. This found its place in the vocational training schools which grew up alongside of the 'grammar' or 'academic' schools. Training is focused on the development of skills, which are required by society (and the church), offering a means to employment. These may include Christian vocational skills such as textual interpretive skills, preaching, teaching, counselling and administration.

Training may promote both personal and societal growth and progress, extending beyond the simple acquisition of skills (Benjamin 1975: 13). However, it is often co-opted for its exchange value rather than for its intrinsic value. Education theory, particularly as it relates to further adult education and training, may be appropriated by economic interests, emphasising the instrumentalist or 'human capital' value of training (Geibler 1996: 34).

²⁸ The term 'popular education' will be used in this sense throughout this thesis.

²⁹ The desire for liberation, not only politically but also intellectually, which was central to Freire's thought continues to influence educational thinking in sub-Saharan Africa.

A widespread policy shift took place in the 1980s in many countries. Education for social reform, equal opportunity, and democratisation was increasingly replaced by education for work. Policy documents from various countries written since the 1980s reveal an erosion of the commitment to equality and an increasing dominance of the economic imperative (Coffield 1999: 491; Korsgaard 1997: 16).

There were so many certainties in our Romantic period – I identify as the 30s, 50s, and particularly 60s... By contrast, our Modernist present adult education is frequently utilitarian, pragmatic, instrumental, targeted, and often brutish. Very infrequently is it holistic... Nowadays we deliver a great deal more adult education in total, but we distribute it, for the most part, according to paradigms designed by governments, commercial companies, occasionally social-purpose voluntary or political organizations. Thus instrumentalism rules; and in most countries vocational, or more properly work-oriented, programs top the list of priorities (Stock 1992: 27-28).

The tension between the ‘instrumentalism’ or ‘functionalism’ of much adult training and the ‘liberating’ and ‘humanising’ objective of popular or radical adult education has resulted in the hesitant merger of the two, at least in rhetoric, during the past decade. In the 1990s, the distinction between adult education and adult training has been blurred in an attempt to come to a more balanced approach to adult learning (Korsgaard 1997: 16-17).

This process has been evidenced in South Africa’s rethinking of education in the context of the new democratic society after the demise of apartheid. Key players in the adult education realm have called for an integration of ‘education’ and ‘training’. Shirley Walters notes that both the African National Congress and the National Training Board “have argued strongly for a lifelong learning model which integrates education and training. The argument for a lifelong learning system is made in terms of the imperatives, firstly, to redress the apartheid past, secondly, to strive for social equity and thirdly, to achieve economic competitiveness” (Walters 1996: 13).

The word ‘learning’ is becoming increasingly central to the whole field of adult education as it is supposedly able to embrace the social, democratic and humanising goals of popular education and the skill development goals related to training. James Draper says, “The essence, the very heart, of adult education is learning, just as

learning is the essence of living. The primary purpose of adult education is to facilitate adult learning.” Again he says, “Once we begin to organize and plan learning, it becomes education”(Draper 1992: 74). The danger here is that as learning seeks to blend the popular and the instrumental, it is in danger of becoming meaningless in itself, used by all sides to denote very divergent agenda biases. The fashionable process of eulogising learning and denigrating teaching has additionally created the false impression that teaching and learning are two distinct activities, rather than two parts of a single reciprocal process (Coffield 1999: 493).

A growing concern in this debate is that adult learning should be firmly grounded in the context of real life. Effective learning takes place in relation to everyday life and is “a change in our interpretation of something” (Larsson 1997: 252).

The relationship between everyday learning and adult education is one of the most fundamental questions in educational discourse. Far from being an issue that does not seem very exciting, this is, in fact, explosive (Larsson 1997: 250).

Learning takes place in the interaction of all of the varied aspects of existence. As such, learning is also a complex interweaving of these various dimensions. The history of formal education, however, has been dominated more by concerns about delivery and quality than about the learners themselves and the life experience that they bring with them (Broadfoot 2001: 261). Yet, “learning is not just a psychological process that happens in splendid isolation from the world in which the learner lives, but ... it is intimately related to that world and affected by it” (Jarvis 1987: 11).

Learning is the process through which knowledge is appropriated, analysed and reorganised within the context of human existence, enabling agency which dynamically develops knowledge itself and actively reshapes society and culture. The psychological, political, and cultural contexts of life each filter new information and combine to process knowledge when learning occurs and then are, in turn, reordered, reshaped, and developed by this agency which learning inspires. Learning, then, is developmental of necessity, because the process itself is constantly and dynamically changing and expanding. Each time new learning takes place, it

changes the very filters of politics, psychology, and culture through which it passes. This means that the next learning experience will be inherently different, as it will be filtered through an altered set of lenses. Learning is dynamic. It is shaped by the context of life, but it shapes that very context as well. Adult learning is potentially very complex, then, as it has a long history of dynamic development resulting from previous learning.

This understanding of the locus of learning makes it quite clear that learning is not determined so much by setting, as it is by the context of life itself. The current term 'lifelong learning' has been appropriated, contested, and re-defined by numerous interest groups, all struggling for their own definition. In this process, the state and employers increasingly use "the rhetoric of lifelong learning first and foremost to make workers more flexible and more employable" (Coffield 1999). 'Life-wide learning' more appropriately conveys the entire context of life in which learning occurs and, as will be seen, resonates more closely with indigenous education patterns in Uganda.

The phrase 'further education', with its connotations of institutional studies which start and stop, does not convey this same freedom and openness of learning. Learning which takes place within the political, cultural, and psychological context of life and throughout the duration of life may be facilitated by institutions or centres of learning, but is not at all restricted to them. Learning not only needs to relate to the everyday life of the learner, but it should affect all aspects of his life.

There is a practical tendency among some educators to compartmentalise aspects of education into, for instance, cognitive and skills-based learning. "Cognition describes how people receive, store, retrieve, transform, and transmit information" (Merriam and Caffarella 1991: 179). Bruner calls this the "computational view" which is "concerned with information processing: how finite, coded unambiguous information about the world is inscribed, sorted, stored, collated, retrieved, and generally managed by a computational device" (Bruner 1996: 1). Such an approach side-steps the humanising or liberating potential of education.

Much of the study in cognition has revolved around the concept of intelligence. Intelligence may be defined as the mental ability to store, sort, collate, and retrieve information efficiently and effectively. However, such a strict definition is not necessarily appropriate in all contexts and it is now recognised that both the cognitive and affective spheres impact upon learning (Broadfoot 2001: 264). There is evidence that in parts of Africa, intelligence is not simply related to the speed or efficiency of mental computational skills, but is more closely associated with life-wide learning and the concept of wisdom. Wober investigated the Baganda's understanding of intelligence and found that it was substantially different from the Northern understanding of the word.

There is some evidence that a traditional Kiganda concept of intelligence is involved in developing a respect for traditional culture and social forms, and that it is associated with a measured (rather than hurried) approach to affairs. These two characteristics may be at odds with western influences, which give credit to ideas which make for social change, and which admire speed of response (Wober 1971: 16).

This same finding was noted by Xydias in a study conducted in the Congo. "The concept of intelligence is seen as similar to that of wisdom. ...intelligence has no connotation of quickness" (Xydias 1972: 5).

Such a correlation between intelligence and wisdom forces the definition and study of intelligence out of the purely cognitive domain. Wisdom needs to be defined as well and its definition is evidently more culturally influenced. Birren and Fisher, in a fascinating study on wisdom, reveal that "people can become wise as they ripen in a particular culture".

Another dimension of wisdom relevant to its attribution to older persons is the fact that it involves a changing balance between acting and reflecting. Young men are not regarded as likely persons to display wisdom because they are prone to act rather than to reflect upon the consequences of their actions. Thus, youth may have the capacity to be wise but are too impelled to action to demonstrate this capacity (Birren and Fisher 1990: 319).

This resonates closely with Wober and Xydias' findings in Africa but contrasts with the cognitive approach to intelligence, which values mental speed and efficiency.

Studies in Uganda and Tanzania expand our understanding of the African concept of 'the learned' beyond both intelligence and wisdom. Research among the Chagga of Tanzania revealed the *mpvunde* as the fully educated person, who is formed, moulded, and educated holistically. This was in contrast to the book-educated person (Mosha 1999: 216). Katahoire's study in eastern Uganda revealed the concept of *amakesi* (Katahoire 1998: 88). This encompasses the mental capacity to learn, reason and to make judgements. At the same time, it includes the content of the learning such as knowledge, skills and attitudes. Finally, it includes the notion of social responsibility. As such, *amakesi* pushes the boundaries of holistic education in Uganda beyond the narrow confines of cognition and skills-based knowledge towards the life-wide integration of learning.

The contested instrumentalism associated with 'training' and the liberationism of popular adult education have both found new acceptability in the term 'adult learning'. Yet the compartmentalisation of learning into psychological, cognitive, or developmental skills must be moderated and understood in the life context within which learning occurs in place and time. Adult education in Uganda must situate itself strategically within the life context of its participants, empowering adults through learning for transformation while acknowledging the parameters which that life context places on what is recognised as education. This positioning requires careful analysis of the political, global and local forces which influence the potential effectiveness and acceptability of adult education within a particular society.

POLITICS AND EDUCATION

Education systems and approaches are indelibly marked by the political environment in which they are formed and function, either reflecting or resisting the prevailing political climate. Societies adopt, whether through the apathy, will or subjugation of the population, many different forms of political systems. Much of the research and writing about how adults learn has taken place in the context of pluralistic

democratic societies.³⁰ These societies openly espouse diversity and innovation. They readily acknowledge the right and even the value of new or alternative ways of thinking and of organising knowledge. This does not mean that the novel is always accepted by the society, as all societies have forms of hegemonic control which resist certain kinds of change, but the opportunity to pursue inquiry freely is highly valued.

This is not the case in many societies of the world, however. Even many democratic societies are not pluralistic. This non-pluralistic democracy may be based on cultural or religious mores, but it is often popularly accepted. New and innovative thinking and learning are not always acceptable in these societies. Furthermore, during the post-colonial period in Africa, many nations have sought to develop their own Africa-inspired political systems,³¹ although some have suggested these may be characterised by “democratisation of disempowerment in which people voted without choosing”(Olukoshi 2002: 5).

Uganda, for instance, moved from a federal democratic parliamentary system, which was installed at independence, to a new constitution and a national democratic system in 1966. Milton Obote led Uganda during this period, first as Prime Minister and then as President. In 1971, Idi Amin toppled the government in a coup and ruled as dictator until 1979. After 1979, Uganda struggled through a series of governments with the eventual return of Milton Obote to power in December 1980. In 1986, Yoweri Museveni took over the reigns of government after a protracted rebellion. Museveni has tried to establish an African form of democracy which is based on grass roots participation in a ‘movement’ that is supposedly broad enough to include everyone, instead of in parties, which are seen to be divisive. Internal debate

³⁰ Popular education and its liberating emphasis has roots in the developing world as well, as noted earlier. However, although popular education theory does address how adults learn, it is much broader in scope and may be more properly understood as a paradigm of adult education, rather than simply a theory of learning.

³¹ In Mamdani’s critique, these are an attempt to address the consequences of indirect rule in Africa which created virtual dictatorial rule through customary law that was designed by those who enforced it with the blessing of the state. These developing systems (he uses Uganda as an example) seek to reform customary power, bringing a form of democracy which transcends the “rural-urban” and the “interethnic” divisions in Africa (Mamdani 1996: 296).

continues in Uganda concerning what kind of political system should be adopted. Each of these forms of government conveyed a different message about learning, its value, and the extent of freedom of inquiry which was acceptable.

Pluralism is an example of how the history of societies informs questions of cultural adaptation. Whereas many countries in the North have historically resident ethnic populations which are locally dominant and which must learn, in a pluralist society, to accept the challenges and changes that come with the arrival of immigrants from abroad, many African countries are in a very different situation. Most sub-Saharan African nations, including Uganda, have no single or primary historically resident people or ethnic group. These nations are a conglomeration of many different cultural and ethnic groups which, in most cases, had no historical claim to the territory that is now considered the national boundary.³² Pluralism, then, in Africa, becomes a dynamic attempt by diverse peoples who are now nominally members of new nations, consisting of boundaries which bear little or no resemblance to historical boundaries, to determine who they now are, or who they are to become.³³

This political context greatly influences education and learning. Nation building is often the term used to express the hopes for the education system. However, nation building in Uganda is not based upon an accepted common history, but upon a vast diversity out of which a new and rich identity can come. Adult learners find themselves in the middle of this dynamic process of societal formation. They each make a critical contribution in the formation of a new sense of Ugandan-ness. Yet

³² There are cases of people, such as the San of Southern Africa, who claim to be 'first peoples' or indigenous peoples in specific localities in Africa. Migrations of other cultural groups into their traditional communal localities and the pressures which nation states have exerted on their identities and claims must be recognised. Yet, the territorial claims of these 'first peoples' are not usually the same as the national territorial boundaries. Instead, they exist within or between national borders. For an interesting examination of these 'first peoples' and their struggle for recognition and for their rights, see Barnard and Kenrick (2001).

³³ See Hansen (2002b) for a critique of democracy being identified with pluralism in donor evaluations of good governance in Africa.

they come from very diverse cultural backgrounds which have little in common with this new identity that is still in formation.³⁴

A clear example of this dynamic is seen in the choice of English as the national language and the language of instruction. African languages may be rejected because they are believed to undermine unity, to be too expensive to implement or to be unfit for scientific and technological subjects (Clayton 1998; Mule 1999: 240). Yet some would suggest that rather than unifying ethnic groups, English serves to divide people along class lines (Bunyi 1999: 348). English is not the indigenous language of any of the peoples that constitute the country. It is, instead, part of the new Ugandan national identity.³⁵ There are a small number of primarily urban children for whom English is now their first language. These are usually children of parents who come from two different linguistic backgrounds and so use English as their primary language at home.³⁶ These children may have a new sense of being Ugandan, which their elders were not able to experience, but it may be at the cost of losing the rich traditional cultural context within which their parents' indigenous languages were formed.

Emile Durkheim's designation of 'mechanical' or 'organic' societies helps conceptually to unravel the complex formulation of societies such as that of Uganda (Durkheim 1964). 'Mechanical' societies are denoted by the members' similarity in attitudes, skills, and lifestyles. "Organic societies are much more complex, and are organized on the basis of difference rather than similarity. This type of society is

³⁴ The process of developing a national sense of identity and unity continues to drive both research and policy in Uganda. Both curricular development and the language of education are central elements in this ongoing struggle (Adyanget 1999; Mazrui and Mazrui 1998; Mudoola 1996; Ssekamwa 2000).

³⁵ For an extensive analysis of the consequences of the use of a dominant language for nation building, see May (2001).

³⁶ When parents share a common 'mother tongue', but speak English regularly during the day in urban centres, they often revert to the indigenous language when in the home. Children who grow up in this context may have an advantage as they are exposed to both English and the indigenous language from the start.

increasingly dominant in Africa, and is the one which concerns us at the national level” (Bray et al. 1986: 23-24).

The complexity of African societies, then, has many dimensions. Their ‘organic’ nature creates tremendous diversity and change within a system that is often still seeking national identity. With their emergence from colonial rule, African nations have struggled to promote a sense of nationalism, which had been thrust upon them by the artificial demarcation of national boundaries. Society then becomes a complex mix of people that share either more or less in common with each other and which have very different histories both culturally and educationally. Positioning itself strategically for maximum transformational impact, adult education must recognise the organic complexity of this cultural and political context.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE AND THE CURRICULUM

The ways in which knowledge is defined, structured and organised into the curriculum critically inform an understanding of its owners or dispensers and the role of adult education in its construction. The idea that knowledge is modern and scientific has often led to the association of knowledge with the academic and professional advances of the Northern or relatively more developed countries. As Chambers puts it, “The association of ‘outsider’ modern scientific knowledge with wealth, power and prestige generates and sustains beliefs in its universal superiority, indeed beliefs that it is the only knowledge of any significance” (Chambers 1983: 76). Yet Freire points out that “knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry men pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other” (Freire 1972: 46).

Knowledge is dynamic. There is a reservoir of historic knowledge, but this is not the private reserve of the North or the scientific community. It is held, in part, by all peoples of the world, each with their own particular contribution and approach to it. Furthermore, knowledge is emergent. It is continually being reprocessed and developed by the many and varied players who work with it. “‘To know’ is a passionate, physical activity that is much more than the absorption of new information” (Vella 1996: 82-83). As knowledge is re-worked and expanded, it is

dynamically re-moulded by a variety of cultures, communities, and individuals that act as 'transformers' of their world.

Chambers frames the priorities of this discussion in the terms of 'reality'. He asks, "Whose knowledge counts?" "Whose values?" "Whose reality counts?" (Chambers 1997: 100-101). These are important primary questions. They not only affect perceptions of where knowledge is posited, but the answers offered influence attitudes towards the process of teaching and learning. These questions address the issue of power. "In the final analysis, power is the right to have your definition of reality prevail over other people's definition of reality" (Rowe 1989: 16).

The questions of which knowledge and whose knowledge should count are complex, but must be addressed if the positioning of adult education is to be discerned with any degree of clarity. The shape of the curriculum cannot be defined until one has discerned how knowledge is understood to be formed, categorised and rendered acceptable or reliable within a particular societal context and even across societal boundaries.

Knowledge may be analysed in terms of how it is structured, rather than how it is grouped into collections of different subjects. Using this approach, emphasis is placed on the way in which people have learned to structure their world. Paul Hirst states that a "liberal education must be worked out fully in terms of the forms of knowledge. By these is meant, of course, not collections of information, but the complex ways of understanding experience which man has achieved, which are publicly specifiable and which are gained through learning" (Hirst 1974: 38). This concept of 'forms of knowledge' enables an understanding of how knowledge is structured, but it neglects the issue of knowledge itself and its relation to truth. The potential problem with framing the discussion around 'forms of knowledge' instead of 'collections of information' is that by doing so, knowledge is articulated in terms of process or procedure and not in terms of working theories, accepted fact or truth. If the form becomes the norm, then knowledge itself is made relative.

Denis Lawton accepts that knowledge is socially constructed yet resists relativism by seeking to ground knowledge in something other than its forms or culture and posits

knowledge as “the basis of culture” (Lawton 1975: 114). He organises knowledge into five core disciplines, using culture to shape those disciplines into an appropriate common curriculum through the use of “philosophical questions (cultural universals)” and “sociological questions (cultural variables)” as the starting points for curriculum design (Lawton 1975: 85 [parenthesis in original]). In this framework, culture organises and interprets knowledge, yet knowledge is the basis of culture. Such reasoning appears dangerously close to being circular.

The search for underpinning knowledge with a form of recognised certainty reaches back to classical Greek thought. “Starting as far back as Plato’s *Theaetetus*, philosophers have summarised our notion of knowledge in the formula ‘knowledge is justified true belief.’ This basically means ‘believing what is true and having sufficient reasons for it’” (McInerney 1992: 37). Using this framework, it seems apparent that the principle of validation through history, although not foolproof, is at least a valuable tool in the assessment of knowledge. A working knowledge offers sufficient reason for belief as it is subjected to historical critique, validated through multiple cultural lenses, and maintained under continuing critical analysis (O’Hear 1981: 114-115).

The central strands of this discussion about knowledge highlight that knowledge is socially or culturally constructed and is structured around frameworks or forms that are conceptually coherent. The social forces which construct knowledge in this context include political dynamics within society, exposing the political economy of knowledge which reflects the political economy of schooling as outlined in chapter one. There must also be evidence, either historical or experiential, which lends credence to the truth or validity of this socially valued knowledge. This body of knowledge is legitimised then by cultural, historical and empirical evidence, and is organised into the curriculum. Those areas of knowledge which are deemed foundational and necessary for the development of new knowledge and critique may be termed the ‘core’ curriculum.

The shape, then, of the ‘core’ curriculum in adult theological education in Uganda may be similar in some ways to theological curriculum elsewhere, but it should probably be different in other ways. This is because the curriculum must be shaped

in light of culturally constructed knowledge and in forms which are cognitively coherent within the Ugandan context. The knowledge which forms the curriculum must be recognised as having been legitimised through cultural, historical and empirical evidence; especially within the complex 'cultural history' of Uganda.

However, not all theological knowledge will fit within the limited scope of any particular cultural or intellectual history. By its very nature, it stretches beyond such limitations. Christian theology reaches back almost 4000 years and spans many cultures and histories. Yet, theological education must enable adult learners in Uganda to analyse what they consider to be their own essential forms of knowledge, particularly theological knowledge. They need to decode the symbols used by their society for critical thinking within each of these forms of knowledge before they begin to learn and analyse the knowledge which comes from outside of their own theoretical background. Moving from the known to the unknown, as they are exposed to Northern or other forms of knowledge or curriculum, they will already have a conscious foundation from which to approach and criticise it. They will have a point of reference which enables them better to critique the external knowledge which is inevitably thrust upon them through the very nature of theological knowledge and through the forces of globalisation. Ignoring what is already known can be tragic:

We started with the unknown and kept in the unknown. The violation of this principle (moving from the known to the unknown) therefore meant that we were turned into human tape-recorders of meaningless and static pieces of knowledge (Kabuga 1974: 3) [parenthesis mine]).

LOCAL AND GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE

The dynamic forces of globalisation are inevitable and unavoidable in today's knowledge environment. These forces are felt powerfully in the developing world. Whereas in the North, globalisation is a catalyst for ever increasing development and cutting edge thought, in countries like Uganda, it is a powerful outside force which is constantly challenging the very form of indigenous society and culture. Dominated by Northern culture, the forces of globalisation require Ugandans to live in a dual world, their own and that of the North.

The oppressed and exploited do need a critical understanding of competing perspectives and approaches, in order to challenge the dominant approaches, and in order to develop alternatives. Without this, they may continue to accept the dominant explanations; they may even continue to accept and to internalise dominant ideological accounts of themselves, and their cultures, as being the problem; the oppressors' values, inside their own heads. This undermines people's sense of their own identity and worth, and their capacity to envisage the possibility of transformation (Mayo 1997: 30).

It is only in understanding competing perspectives that one can move from just functioning in society to becoming an effective agent within both the global and the local dynamics of society. Globalisation makes it inevitable that Ugandans must live within these dual knowledges. Both are necessary for critical thinking. This duality of knowledges also presents the possibility for the development of a dialectic and critical approach to knowledge (Maurial 1999: 69). However, the formal education system is often seen as ignoring this critical dialectic in favour of simply adopting forms of knowledge and a curriculum that endorse and facilitate restrictive control over knowledge.

When such a meta-level understanding of knowledges is developed, indigenous educators and learners are able to formulate a curriculum which is locally appropriate, but which acknowledges that knowledge is not only local, but also global. There is potential for the ownership of the curriculum to become theirs as they strive for a critical understanding of the necessary dialogue between these dual or multiple forms of knowledge.³⁷ Understanding the importance of where knowledge comes from and who wields it has caused some adult educators, therefore, to separate themselves from the arena of formal education, which was characterised by Freire as "at best" a "misguided system" (Freire 1972: 46) and as the "banking concept of education."

In the banking concept of education, knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing. Projecting an absolute ignorance onto others, a characteristic of the process ideology of oppression, negates education and knowledge as processes of inquiry (Freire 1972: 46).

³⁷ Interestingly, the curriculum's very 'foreignness' may serve either as a cause for resistance or as its main attraction.

This portrayal, however, reflects the context of oppression and dictatorship within which Freire developed his ideas and does not adequately reflect the common need of all people for basic learning within an accepted core curriculum. He also proposes a new approach in which the teacher becomes a “student among students” and offers a “problem-posing” education³⁸ in which teachers and students alike invent and re-invent knowledge as they address relevant problems which they face in their everyday world (Freire 1972: 49-57). This focus upon offering an alternate approach to learning has gained momentum since Freire and has led adult education further and further down the road to being an alternative to formal education, and has sometimes even set it in opposition to the formal sector.

Another attempt to enable adults to use local knowledge in order to address both problems and potential has been the use of PRA. Participatory approaches to learning, developed within the agricultural sector, share the Freirean premise that knowledge is not the private domain of the teacher, but is to be found and discovered in each individual’s interaction with his world. This emphasis upon the learner’s own interaction with his world has led to calls for “reversals in learning” (Chambers 1983: 201) and “putting the last first” (Chambers 1993: 9). “The essence of PRA ... is changes and reversals – of role, behaviour, relationship and learning” (Chambers 1997: 103). The educator sits and asks questions, enabling discussion among the learners, who become the experts.

The difficulty has been that participatory methodology, with these role reversals, is not consistent with formal educational approaches. The old professionalism, which places the teacher in a power position as the holder and dispenser of knowledge, does not lend itself to this type of full-blown participatory learning. Consequently, participatory learning has found its niche primarily in the non-formal education arena. It has been developed extensively in Uganda through ActionAid’s REFLECT

³⁸ Problem-centred adult education has been promoted from many different sides in the attempt to enable adult learners to work creatively with knowledge, often stimulating them to think outside of the usually accepted and scripted forms of knowledge. In this sense, Malcolm Knowles, who preceded Freire and whose andragogical (adult oriented) approach to adult education is very different from Freire, states that the adult’s “orientation toward learning shifts from one of subject-centredness to one of problem-centredness” (Knowles 1996: 84).

circles. These groups combine literacy with participant generated engagement in local development and social issues. They use the mother tongue and develop their own materials instead of using textbooks (International Reflect Circle 2001).

In addition, the participation of prospective learners in programme development from the beginning has been shown to increase programme effectiveness in Africa (Oxenham et al. 2002: 3). Freire related the need for the learners to develop “dialogically” their own programme of learning and study:

The important thing, from the point of view of libertarian education, is for men to come to feel like masters of their thinking by discussing the thinking and view of the world explicitly or implicitly manifest in their own suggestions and those of their comrades. Because this view of education starts with the conviction that it cannot present its own programme but must search for this programme dialogically with the people, it serves to introduce the pedagogy of the oppressed, in the development of which the oppressed must participate (Freire 1972: 95).

Although growing out of an education of resistance, Freire’s objective here was that adult learners should own both knowledge and their thoughts. The right and importance of respecting people’s knowledge and forms of learning was reaffirmed by the Hamburg Declaration on Adult Learning which states, “Adult learning must reflect the richness of cultural diversity and respect traditional peoples’ knowledge and systems of learning” (Hamburg Declaration 1997: 257).

The process of curriculum development, as envisioned by Freire, Chambers and others, has also set popular adult education on a divergent course from formal education. In most formal education systems, curriculum is set by policy and is seen as necessary subject matter which must be passed on to students in order to provide for their development as well as the maintenance and growth of society. It is only in the highest levels of formal education that curricular knowledge begins to become more fluid as it is added to and refined. This then, in turn, is incorporated into the curriculum as new knowledge that needs to be transmitted to incoming students. The concepts of the participatory formation of curriculum and the respect of local knowledges, then, have distanced much of the innovative adult education that is taking place in the Southern world from formal education.

In addition to this, consideration must be given to the formidable pressures exerted on education in general by the increasing influence of globalisation. Globalisation not only allows for the dissemination of thought, including progressive and divergent ideas, but it also facilitates and promotes the tendency towards common thought and the delineation of acceptable norms or standards.

Traditionally, international relations facilitated the exchange of ideas as well as commerce through an interchange between nations. However, in today's world, globalisation shifts this exchange to a new dimension, connecting the global with the local (Korsgaard 1997: 10). Global knowledge is general knowledge that "holds across countries, cultures and times; local knowledge takes account of the specifics of place, people and time" (Stiglitz 2000: 31). Yet, with this 'connection' there is also 'dissonance' as the global and the local vie for influence. As 'global thought' whirls around the globe with ever increasing speed and penetration, developing countries find themselves pursuing a "moving target" as they seek to close the assumed "knowledge gap" between themselves and the industrialised countries (World Bank 1998: 3). Africa risks being left behind (World Bank 2000: 2), resulting in the scramble to 'catch up,' as it were, and in the process, 'global thought' is often appropriated and takes precedence over the local. The potential for globalisation to promote predominantly one form of knowledge, which is usually Northern,³⁹ or to promote the recognition of primarily one form of education is very strong (Vargas 1997: 11). It is not usually an overt pressure, but it is a powerful one.

This aspect of globalisation stimulates the perception that development best occurs in the form that it has taken in the North. Although the educated elite in sub-Saharan Africa often speak loudly against such a stance, referring to it as 'neo-colonialist' and prejudiced, much of the populace seems more accepting of such a view. Long before the present onslaught of Northern thought, knowledge and values gained momentum through globalisation, there was a general resistance on the part of

³⁹ For an interesting regional attempt to counter this by using information technology and print to enable and promote the exchange of knowledge and innovations among fourteen countries of Southern Africa, see Shankanga and Johnson (2001).

African nations, as noted in chapter one, to adopt or develop innovative educational approaches.

...Education departments and missions in British colonial Africa did not unthinkingly impose western-style academic education in the various territories; the impression might otherwise be gained from such critiques as Nyerere's *Education for Self Reliance*, that British educators had no qualms about the elitist, academic nature of these institutions. The truth is rather that there is no alarm raised or remedy suggested by Nyerere that had not been mentioned countless times in the colonial period. Whatever the failures in implementation (and this was due less to official apathy than African resistance to educational differentiation), there was seldom a time in the period from 1843 to 1953 which lacked spokesmen for adaptation; like Nyerere, they set up model farm schools and school-farms, planned to make primary school an integral part of the total village community, and spoke up for an egalitarianism that would prevent a privileged elite from leaving the masses behind (King 1971: 254).

Bray et al. echo King's comment, stating that innovative education faced "African resistance to educational differentiation". He notes that as the non-formal education movement of the 1970s began to die down by the end of the decade, its perceived problems were primarily that non-formal schemes were seen as an alternative to formal education and "as second-best options and had undesirable consequences of social stratification" (Bray et al. 1986: 175). The increased pressures of globalisation today only add to the problem. The transfer of vast quantities of Northern generated knowledge has potential value, but the organisation and tacit⁴⁰ elements of it in the North are often exported subliminally as well (McGinn 2001: 89). This 'package deal' makes the localising of curricula more difficult.

Adult education must think both locally and globally. Locally relevant curriculum needs to be developed, which will enable adult learning to intersect effectively with the everyday life of the learners. Yet, adult education must also remain relevant at the national and global levels. The governments of Southern nations must see it as building a sense of cohesion within the state. It is becoming less and less realistic for

⁴⁰ Tacit knowledge is intangible and implicit and is often best discerned by observing how people act (McGinn 2001: 81-82).

even the rural poor to see themselves as living separate lives, which are not influenced by the forces of globalisation.

The pressures of globalisation which promote Northern knowledge and curricula exert strong forces which resist transformative learning among adults. Adults must be facilitated to grasp their own local formulations of knowledge in order to enable them to interact with other knowledges. This enables effective agency within both the global and the local dynamics of society. Globalisation makes it inevitable that they must live within these dual knowledges. Adult education must position itself strategically to use the great potential of its innovative and learner-centred approaches to enhance the development of knowledge and agency within this complex framework.

CREDENTIALIZATION OF EDUCATION

Credentialization has become an increasingly important educational issue world-wide, and in Uganda in particular. The perceived need for higher and higher qualifications has led to credential inflation. Although this may be portrayed simply as a personal drive for higher credentials, at a deeper level it is evidence of societal influence on learning. Dore termed this the “diploma disease” (Dore 1997). This ‘disease’ not only infects societies, but it also influences learning patterns and motives.

...the processes of bureaucratization, working on the occupational structures of modern societies, have consequences for the educational system which are far from being wholly benign – less ‘learning for its own sake’ and ‘learning to do a job’ and more ‘learning to get a job’ with detrimental effects on the quality of learning. Further, these processes, common to modern societies, work faster, and have more deleterious effects, in the modernizing ‘late developer’ societies of the Third World (Dore 1997: vii).

Interestingly, at about the same time as the first edition of Dore’s book (1976), Mwalimu Julius Nyerere attributed the drive for credentialization to both the individual and to the society at large. His comments, in a 1976 presentation to the International Conference on Adult Education and Development in Dar es Salaam, exemplify the dynamic interplay between society and individual learning.

Learning has not liberated a man if all he learns to want is a certificate on his wall, and the reputation of being a 'learned person' – a possessor of knowledge. For such a desire is merely another aspect of the disease of the acquisitive society – the accumulation of goods for the sake of accumulating them. The accumulation of knowledge or, worse still, the accumulation of pieces of paper which represent a kind of legal tender for such knowledge, has nothing to do with development (Nyerere 1978: 28-29).

Makerere's extra-mural programme⁴¹ increasingly faced this problem as Uganda approached independence:

As independence approached, more jobs became available but competition became severer, due to the expanded secondary and other forms of education, and it soon became more than ever realised that paper qualifications mattered. The question at Independence was how long would the department survive in its approach without taking cognizance of the fact that certificates and training for courses that led to immediate employment were what was beginning to matter? (Kwesiga 1975: 17)

By 1967 the Centre for Continuing Education, as the Extra-Mural Studies Department was renamed, was awarding two certificates: the Certificate of Adult Studies and the Intermediate Certificate for those unable to cope with more advanced studies (Extra-Mural Studies 1966: 8; Extra-Mural Studies 1967: 5-6).

Mwalimu's concern for the effects on society of the individual's desire to learn in order to hang a certificate on the wall finds its counterpart in what has been termed 'social capital'. Social capital is the benefit accrued to society at large through learning. Alternatively, it is the benefit accrued to society through the learning, production and efforts of individual members. It is a recognition that while society influences learning, so does the learner influence society. Schuller uses the concept of 'social capital' in tandem with that of 'human capital'.

Let me crystallise the issue by asking the question: is it conceivable that we might have an expansion of human capital, as conventionally measured, and a decline in social capital? I think it is. This suggests a dystopia of individuals permanently plugged into their personal training programmes which guide them to higher and higher qualifications, which in turn raise

⁴¹ The extra-mural programme had focused on providing further education opportunities, but these were seen as outside of the formal university programme and were not aimed at awarding formal qualifications.

their chances of being the one who keeps their job, but without a sense of the value of learning which they share with others, including their employers, their families or their wider social milieu. If human capital accumulation occurs independently of such social contexts, it will be, at best, of very limited social and economic value (Schuller 1998: 19).

The demand to get more credentials that mark one's place in a stratified society as having mastered particular skills or knowledge drives the engine of learning for certification even faster.⁴² The impetus to learn in order to 'keep up' or in order to 'make it' economically has led to the increasing use of economic terms such as 'investment' in the parlance of lifelong learning. The voluntarism of learning has begun to disappear in societies that demand continued learning in order to maintain the competitive edge. As Tight says, "Lifelong learning and education are linked to the requirements of both the economy ... and the broader society" (Tight 1998: 253). When the necessity to learn in order to work competitively becomes the driving force behind learning, society shows its hand in influencing why learning happens, and possibly how it happens as well. When learning becomes compulsory for economic and social advancement, we run the danger of destroying its "individual, emotional and delightful elements" (Tight 1998: 262).

The motivations of adults to learn in particular circumstances must be determined and dealt with at face value. It is commonly assumed that adults are motivated to attain functional literacy so that they can apply it in their daily work. However, a study of FAL, the government led functional adult literacy programme in Uganda, revealed that "learners do not appear to associate literacy with the occupations they follow" (Okech et al. 2001: xxi). The link between literacy and the occupations of the learners did not seem to be clear in the learners' minds. Instead, learners emphasised the benefits of literacy as the ability to participate in civic activities in their communities such as council meetings and voting activities. They also mentioned increased self-confidence and the ability to avoid being cheated or manipulated as benefits of being literate (Okech et al. 2001: xviii). Motivation may

⁴² For an interesting perspective on how this is actualised in nations, particularly those of the OECD, see Reich's analysis of the role of symbolic analysts as the new knowledge elite (Reich 1991: 225-233).

be conditioned by the political society, by cultural forces, by economic pressures, by the desire for a secure future (Dyer 2001: 322) or by the education bureaucracy, but regardless of the source, it remains the driving force behind adult learning.

The effect of schooling, the way it alters a man's capacity *and will* to do things, depends not only on what he learns, or the way he learns it, but also on *why* he learns it. That is at the basis of the distinction between schooling which is education, and schooling which is only qualification, a mere process of certificating... (Dore 1997: 8 [emphasis in the original]).

Motivation is not static, but dynamic. "Motivation is not a permanent state; it is a transitory element that requires continuous attention" (Charters 1992: 87). Educators must be cognisant of the potentially more 'earthy' goals of adult learners which may be as simple as to learn how to read and write (Carr-Hill 2001: 8). The educator must be always alert to opportunities to make the most of the motivation which learners bring in order to actuate learning.

Societal economic factors influence the education process greatly. They can necessitate learning in order to compete or conversely, they may make education very difficult due to the scarcity of resources. The inflation of credentials can lead to societal forces which operate so as to remove the fascination and delight from the education experience, discouraging innovative and divergent thinking. Nevertheless, the drive for credentialization is a societal reality which adult education must recognise if it is to powerfully impact society. If adult education is to position itself effectively so as to generate real learning, it must ask the 'why' question. Why do people want to learn?

LEARNING AND CULTURE

The term culture, as used here, is taken to refer to the communal context in which norms of socialisation are learned and which shares common symbols, verbal and non-verbal, and values that engender a sense of belonging and identity. Religion and theological reflection are an integral component of the cultural context (Mugambi 1996: 25). Culture is not to be equated with lack of diversity or with homogeneity in every dimension. Rather it denotes the norms and strategies by which the particular community functions and clarifies its identity. Serpell offers a description of African

culture as the place where “identities are often rooted in indigenous norms of socialization” (Serpell 1993: 109).

Culture, cognition and psychological growth or orientation are not compartmentalisable in real life or in learning. It is natural to try to compartmentalise various aspects of life, which seem at times incongruous or in tension with one another. Serpell notes the tendency of teachers in Africa to compartmentalise certain aspects of schooling from that of rural culture.

The principal cognitive strategy used by the teachers appears to be one of compartmentalisation, with certain subjects being construed as legitimate topics of conversation with parents, while others are reserved for a different kind of discourse protected by a professional mystique against intrusion by the uninitiated (Serpell 1993: 132).

Bray et al. note that this has led to schools often “being regarded as institutions which are separate from the ordinary lives of communities” (Bray et al. 1986: 121).⁴³ Yet, it is this very tension in education which is evidence of the interaction and dynamic intercourse between these spheres of life that constitute the context of learning itself.

Learning finds its place in the midst of life, in the dynamic interplay between multiple forces, including culture, that act upon the individual as learner. Learning does not normally occur in isolation either from others or from various dimensions of the self. One reason dialogue is an effective learning tool is attributable to the “social and not merely the individualistic character of the process of knowing” (Freire and Macedo 1999: 48). Learning takes place in context, and culture is an essential part of that life context. When learning is segregated from the filtering and clarifying context of life, it becomes unbalanced and lacks transformational potential.

An individual may be a member of multiple cultures, such as the culture within a certain corporate environment, the culture which revolves around a sporting event or the culture of a village. Nevertheless, there is normally a dominant culture within

⁴³ Mwalimu Nyerere decried the way in which formal education served to “divorce its participants from the society it is supposed to be preparing them for” (Nyerere 1967: 11).

which a person's primary socialisation has taken place. Peter Jarvis phrases it, "As the individual grows and matures within the context of social living, the person becomes, in part, a reflection of the sum total of experiences that the individual has in society" (Jarvis 1987: 13). He goes on to say that "learning always occurs within a social context and that the learner is also to some extent a social construct, so that learning should be regarded as a social phenomenon as well as an individualistic one" (Jarvis 1987: 15).

Culture's influence on learning is profound. It may even be said to have a formative role to play in the way in which the mind works. Jerome Bruner compares two conceptions of how the mind works. The first is what he calls the "computational" view. This view is concerned with the mind as a processor of information (Bruner 1996: 1). The second approach is what he calls "culturalism",

...where "reality" is represented by a symbolism shared by members of a cultural community in which a technical-social way of life is both organized and construed in terms of that symbolism. This symbolic mode is not only shared by a community, but conserved, elaborated, and passed on to succeeding generations who, by virtue of this transmission, continue to maintain the culture's identity and way of life (Bruner 1996: 3).

Scribner explains that concepts which are transmitted through culture may then be internalised by members of that culture:

Thus, conceptual inventions which are social in origin and part of the human legacy, have the potential through processes of cultural transmission of being internalized by the individual and becoming part of his inner world (Scribner 1997a: 161).

Recognition of the tremendous influence which culture has upon the way the mind works necessitates a re-evaluation of what is meant by education and learning. Learning can no longer be simply the processing of culturally free facts and information, which are perceived to be neutral in character. Rather, it must recognise the way in which that knowledge will be perceived, organised and processed by the mind in cultural context.

...education is not simply a technical business of well-managed information processing, nor even simply a matter of applying 'learning theories' to the classroom or using the results of subject-centred 'achievement testing.' It is a complex pursuit of fitting a culture to the needs of its members and of

fitting its members and their ways of knowing to the needs of the culture (Bruner 1996: 43).

The cultural lens influences the most foundational elements of one's approach to learning.⁴⁴ Even the most basic skills of literacy are shaped by the cultural context in which they are learned and used. Street states that skills such as reading and writing are contextually dependent. They are not neutral or merely technical. "The skills and concepts that accompany literacy acquisition, in whatever form, do not stem in some automatic way from the inherent qualities of literacy ... but are aspects of a specific ideology" (Street 1984: 1).

The cognitive processing of knowledge and the practice and use of skills that are essential for knowledge formation are not universal or supra-cultural, but are shaped by cultural, societal and psychological forces. Serpell clearly identifies the necessity for literacy to be understood within the socio-cultural context:

The psychological consequences of literacy cannot be understood in isolation from their socio-cultural context. Not only does the individual who becomes literate in Africa need a coherent sense of how his or her knowledge relates to that of other members of her society. More fundamentally, she needs a cultural framework within which to explore and realise the potential of the amplifying tool she is acquiring (Serpell 1993: 107).

In sub-Saharan Africa, literacy is often developed in a language other than one's vernacular, potentially disabling the capacity for the construction of knowledge and its ownership.⁴⁵

This concept can be extended beyond the cognitive to the more practical aspects of learning as well. For instance, the educational setting is often conceived of as a

⁴⁴ There is a difference between recognising the ways in which culture informs the learning process and the attempt to adapt education culturally, especially in schools, to be more appropriate. Philip Foster warned that "the idea of the 'cultural adaptation' of schools to traditional society is basically a contradiction in terms" since "formal education constituted a new dimension of social structure" (Foster 1965: 7). Yet, this does not invalidate the understanding that culture influences learning and therefore should influence pedagogy, if schools are to be places where learning occurs.

⁴⁵ Conversely, when literacy is developed in the vernacular, it runs the risk of being unpopular and of lacking written sources (Okech et al. 2001: xvii, xx).

classroom with chairs, desks or tables. The format used in the learning setting may reflect pedagogical concerns such as circles for interaction or dialogue, tables for group co-operation, or rows for lectures. However, cultural influences may also influence the learning setting.

Social and cultural norms and values affect the settings in which adults teach and are taught, what they are expected to teach and learn, and the ways teachers and learners experience and regard education. These factors are not isolated. The relationships among factors are dynamic and constellate uniquely in every classroom and every setting (Nesbit 1998: 168).

These cultural norms and values are not limited to the classroom or the organisation of furniture. The grouping of learners is another example of the cultural dimension of learning. In some cultures, it may be difficult for elders to sit in a circle with younger members. In some African cultures, gender issues may influence the group dynamics of learning.

The importance of cultural perspective is highlighted when one looks at the historical introduction of formal schooling into Africa by the colonial powers. The socio-cultural context of the agenda set by early nineteenth century educators in Europe greatly influenced schooling in Africa.

It seems that no one asked when exporting European education to Africa: how do African societies conceptualise children and their needs for socialisation? Instead, a set of interdependent equations, which had become established within orthodox Western thought and which are deeply ingrained in the institutionalised practices of formal education, were exported wholesale to the people of the Third World under the label of opportunities for enlightenment, liberation and enrichment, and which in practice often serve the very opposite purposes of mystification, oppression and impoverishment: civilisation = urban life-style, education = schooling, intelligence = aptitude for school subjects (Serpell 1993: 26).

Serpell considers that no one asked the important sociological questions before exporting education to Africa. As noted earlier in this chapter, Western-style education was not unthinkingly imposed upon Africa (King 1971: 254). However, the Western 'equations' that Serpell notes may still have been exported as the demand for Western-style education in Africa remained strong.

Learning is not restricted by cultural forces, but rather shaped and enabled by them. Just as it is influenced by culture, it stretches and reshapes that very culture in a dynamic interplay between the two. Learning need not destroy or negate culture, but instead plays a critical role in maintaining the viability and life of the culture itself.

It seeks to enable students to distance themselves from their upbringing, to see their values in a broader context. For only then can the culture remain alive to the possibility of change and develop the consequent capacity to adapt itself to an environment which is inevitably in flux. ...We chart our growth by our willingness to broaden the boundaries and deepen the meanings of membership in our tribe (Daloiz 1988: 236-237).

The potential benefit which culture lends to learning is thus fed back into culture, developing both breadth and depth in the identity which culture has willed to the learner.

Learning does not take place in one dimension of life, untouched by or immune to other spheres of one's existence. Instead, these dimensions of life are in constant interplay, mutually influencing learning. It is this vital interplay between the context of life, culture, politics and local knowledges which gives learning the potential of being such an exciting adventure. Together, these dynamic cultural and traditional forces combine with personal hereditary predispositions to create learning patterns. These patterns may emphasise memorisation, orality, reading or participatory approaches. They represent "an individual's characteristic and consistent approach to organising and processing information" (Tennant 1997: 80).

Adult learning potentially has a very complex mix of influences which could help to form learning styles. This is a natural outcome of the richer storehouse or reservoir of experience which is developed over a longer life span in the psychological, political and cultural spheres of life's context. Merriam and Caffarella note what they refer to as three "non-cognitive factors in particular – pacing, meaningfulness, and motivation – which have been shown to affect adult learning" (Merriam and Caffarella 1991:309). These are, in fact, influences drawn from the life context of adults. Pacing, for example, refers to the time which an individual has to examine a problem or learning opportunity. This depends on age, work or other obligations in the community. Meaningfulness of learning in adulthood could be influenced by

economic factors, personal inquisitiveness, hobbies or past experience which have underscored the need for learning in a particular area.

There is the need for a greater analysis of the cultural context of individual learners' lives when, as adults, they engage in education. Adult learning cannot simply be systematised according to generalised and all-encompassing theories. Rather,

... richer forms of analysis may lie in more specific examinations of the characteristics of specific individuals and their contexts with regard to what they are learning, the setting in which they learn and the relationships with those peers and tutors with whom they learn. All these considerations may contribute to how individuals learn – the learning process (Hanson 1996: 99).

When knowledge arises out of one's own learning processes, it is "owned knowledge" (Ellerman 2002: 16). Such an approach recognises the diversity of life contexts and the resultant variety of learning styles or patterns of individuals and communities. By recognising the influence of culture upon adult learning, adult education can position itself pedagogically and epistemologically to enable real learning to occur.⁴⁶

LEARNING AND INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

Recognition of the life context and cultural dimensions of the development of knowledge and learning leads one to consider the role which indigenous knowledge plays in adult learning. Such knowledge may be assumed to be basic or even common-place to adult learners themselves, yet it formidably influences one's learning patterns and processes.

Indigenous knowledge should not be associated with ideas of simplicity or pre-modern thought. Rather, it reflects the way in which "residents of an area have come to understand themselves in relation to their natural environment" (Semali and

⁴⁶ Although these comments have focused on the role that culture plays in shaping learning patterns, other factors such as psychology, ontology and history also critically influence the formation of learning styles (Brookfield 1984; Edwards et al. 1996; Entwistle 1998; Gould 1978; Hall and Kidd 1978; Kidd 1973; Kolb 1993; Lowenthal et al. 1977; Marton et al. 1997; Morrow and King 1998; Nesbit 1998; Skinner 1971).

Kincheloe 1999: 3). This understanding is organised into knowledge systems which help people to make sense of their lives in the cultural and environmental context within which they find themselves. These knowledge systems and education patterns must be taken seriously if adult education is to be transformative in Africa (Semali and Kincheloe 1999: 49). Although indigenous knowledge is not in any way essentially a rural phenomenon, in the context of this study it represents knowledge as constructed and ordered in primarily rural Uganda, since this is where the large majority of the learners involved in this study both live and work.

The complexity of these factors which influence learning may be positively addressed through the lens of narrative. Narrative, according to Bruner, is a fundamental mode used by all people for organising and making sense of their world (Bruner 1996: XIV). It facilitates the complex expression of a life so that the ordering of what is shared, as well as what is left out and included, creates a recognisable and purposive account (Cross 2002: 32). This fascinating suggestion serves as a natural bridge between the literature of the North and that of Africa concerning learning and knowledge because, although narrative is common to all people, it is particularly central to African forms of culture, psyche and learning. The oral tradition is strong in Africa and although recognised long ago, it has not always been credited with real educational value within education circles. Narrative is a mode of expressing and constructing one's view of the world which has the potential of drawing together many of the varied facets of human experience.

It is through our own narratives that we principally construct a version of ourselves in the world, and it is through its narrative that a culture provides models of identity and agency to its members. Appreciation of the centrality of narrative comes not from any single discipline, but from a confluence of many: literary, socio-anthropological, linguistic, historical, psychological, even computational (Bruner 1996: XIV).

Bruner adopts what he calls a cultural psychology approach to education and learning. Psychology and culture merge in his concept of “intersubjectivity” – the human ability to understand the minds of others whether through language, gesture, or other means (Bruner 1996: 20). Learning is very dependent on intersubjectivity, according to Bruner, as it is an important means of communicating knowledge and understanding, often through narrative. “Our Western pedagogical tradition hardly

does justice to the importance of intersubjectivity in transmitting culture. Indeed, it often clings to a preference for a degree of explicitness that seems to ignore it” (Bruner 1996: 20-21). The result is an approach to education that neglects one of the learning styles which most naturally fits the context of normal everyday life.

We devote an enormous amount of pedagogical effort to teaching the methods of science and rational thought: what is involved in verification, what constitutes contradiction, how to convert mere utterances into testable propositions, and on down the list. For these are the ‘methods’ for creating a ‘reality according to science.’ Yet we live most of our lives in a world constructed according to the rules and devices of narrative. Surely education could provide richer opportunities than it does for creating the metacognitive sensitivity needed for coping with the world of narrative reality and its competing claims (Bruner 1996: 149).

Narrative is a natural mode of blending the psychological and socio-cultural worlds.

Writers from within the African continent recognise the important knowledge base within narrative. One of the dynamics of narrative is the fluid way in which it enables knowledge to be communicated and formulated, resisting static representations. Many values, for instance, are communicated in narrative style in Africa. Values and lessons in indigenous education are often embodied in the legends, folk-lore, symbols and proverbs of the society (Dzobo 1975: 86; Semali and Kincheloe 1999: 8). These examples of African narrative are potentially rich in indigenous knowledge. Much of this knowledge may be termed ‘tacit knowledge’ in that it is valid knowledge that can be acted upon, yet it would be difficult to codify it into explicit knowledge that could be archived (Polanyi 1983: 24; Stiglitz 2000: 34).

Indigenous or local knowledges have often been considered less valuable or inappropriate for learning in school. Schooling has even played a role in devaluing indigenous knowledge and indigenous education patterns (Kabuga 1974: 3; Nyerere 1967: 13). Indigenous knowledges are often dismissed from academic curricula because the Western rules of evidence and dominant epistemologies discount them as irrelevant (Semali and Kincheloe 1999: 15). Yet, Katahoire’s study in Uganda revealed that both schooled and unschooled adults draw on these local knowledges regularly (Katahoire 1998: 157-162). The “Kampala Declaration on Indigenous

Knowledge”⁴⁷ urged the Uganda government to include indigenous knowledge in development planning (Uganda National Council for Science and Technology 1999) and the World Bank has supported such a move through the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (Gorjestani 2000: 3-4).

Semali describes indigenous knowledge as “the local knowledge that is unique to a given culture or society” and “contrasts with the international knowledge system, which is generated through the global network of universities, research laboratories and institutes” (Semali 1999: 309).⁴⁸ Indigenous knowledges are characteristically holistic and are transmitted through oral tradition (Maurial 1999: 62). As a “locally owned and managed resource,” indigenous knowledge has the potential to empower local communities (Gorjestani 2000: 2-3; Uganda National Council for Science and Technology 1999).

Indigenous knowledge may serve as the foundation from which new knowledge can and should be constructed. Acknowledging what African learners already know, which Semali (1999: 314) calls their “indigenous literacies”, can enhance learning by making connections between what is already held as cultural knowledge and new knowledge discovered in the classroom.

Indigenous literacies provide an important database for any follow-up learning. Indigenous literacies are a complex set of abilities students bring to the classrooms, abilities which span their lifetime and employ their indigenous language to relating their history, their stories of everyday life, traditions, poetry, songs, theater, proverbs, dreams, epistemology and skills to communicate complex matters among themselves and with others outside their communities (Semali 1999: 314).

⁴⁷ The Kampala Declaration was the result of a national workshop on the development of a national strategy and framework of action for the sustainable application of indigenous knowledge for development, which was held in Kampala from December 8-9, 1999. Delegates were representatives of both public and private sectors, non-governmental organisations, community-based organisations and civil society. They represented organisations dedicated to the promotion of indigenous knowledge in Uganda.

⁴⁸ Dominant Western knowledge may also, in reality, be a “local knowledge that denies its locality” (Semali and Kincheloe 1999: 28).

Semali's use of the term 'literacies' to refer to knowledge which is often unwritten, unnecessarily stretches the term 'literacy' and incorporates it into orality based knowledge. It is much clearer to refer to these 'indigenous literacies' as indigenous knowledges. These knowledges influence learning since they are the filters through which learners, knowingly or unknowingly, process new information and concepts. A review of the FAL and REFLECT literacy programmes in Uganda reveals that the designers of the programmes "appear to be out of touch with what poor, rural adults know, feel, and do already" (Okech et al. 2001: xix). By acknowledging and building upon these knowledges, learning could be greatly enhanced in terms of understanding, relevance (Prakash 2000: 3) and its potential for empowerment (Uganda National Council for Science and Technology 1999). Such pedagogical sensitivity reflects a culturally appropriate use of the constructivist approach which emphasises the importance of building upon pre-existing knowledge (Quiroz 1999: 209; Rogers 1996: 308).

Indigenous knowledge has traditionally been communicated through indigenous education systems. The very fact that indigenous education remains in Africa, despite the sweeping influence of competing systems is evidence of its value and strength (Ocitti 1994: 75). One apparent characteristic of indigenous education is that it is firmly embedded in the culture and community itself (Kenyatta 1938: 106; Nyerere 1967: 3). It is a form of learning which prizes integration and avoids compartmentalisation. Learning is not separate from other aspects of life. The sense of going off to learn and then coming home does not resonate with traditional learning. "Unlike the Western school system as introduced in East Africa, indigenous education did not alienate individuals from their culture or society, since it was the process of the humanization of man in one's society" (Ocitti 1994: 48).⁴⁹

This integrated approach to learning within society was carried over into the types of knowledge learned as well. Instead of separating off different kinds of knowledge

⁴⁹ Ocitti is speaking from a historical perspective here, but the previous reference to his writing in this paragraph reveals that he asserts that indigenous education continues. This is particularly the case in rural Africa.

into distinct disciplines with boundaries and minimal overlap, indigenous learning in Uganda is holistic and interwoven, taking place in the actual ebb and flow of life.

The doctrine of multiple learning encouraged that one learning activity become a spring board for launching a variety of educational experiences covering the epistemological, technical, agricultural, historical, biological, religious, military, medical, ethical and environmental concerns. Through the integrated learning approach, an individual, in learning about a concrete skill or operation, acquired a great deal from other domains of knowledge within the local setting (Okello 1994: 29).

Traditionally, this unified approach also extended to an inclusion of all age groups of society in the learning structure. This is not to say that all age groups learned together, but rather that the various age groups all had a role to play in the learning process. The production of knowledge and the determination of its use were “collective and intergenerational” (Viergever 1999: 337). Bartels’ study of the Akan of Ghana led him to say, “In indigenous Akan education, the whole group in its institutional relationships is the educative agent ... engaged in a joint enterprise for both old and young” (Bartels 1995: 60). Although much learning made use of age groups or peer learning together, it also fostered an understanding of place in society and of respect for elders (Bray et al. 1986: 105). Ocitti identifies a ‘vertical’ structure within East African society which he believes encouraged continual learning throughout life.

Vertically, indigenous education was organized to meet the learning needs of individuals in life-long perspective i.e. from the cradle, as it were, to the grave. In every East African society, the life-span of each individual was divided into life-cycle stages which greatly facilitated the process of learning especially the basic knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for successful living as an individual and as a member of one’s society (Ocitti 1994: 26).

Another characteristic of indigenous education is its emphasis on doing. Much of traditional education was pragmatic, participatory and active. Ocitti notes that “functional learning implied that what was learnt was meaningful, relevant to life and productive in terms of contributions it made to the welfare of the individual and the group” (Ocitti 1994: 48). The learning often began with observation which would be followed by practice. Bray et al. call this “participant observation” (Bray et al. 1986: 107), but Ocitti appropriately refers to it as “being part and parcel of the

totality of life” and as “exposure to the learning situation” so that awareness prepared the learner for the actual learning opportunity. The learning event itself was characterised by the learner’s involvement in the learning process (Kenyatta 1938: 102-105) by “performing a task; doing work assignments; listening to stories; working with other people etc” (Ocitti 1994: 49-50).⁵⁰

The practice of apprenticeship is one form of learning by doing that has attracted increasing attention. Apprenticeships make use of the practical, functional, and participatory aspects of indigenous learning. While they can maintain very close ties to the culture and society, they are not as integrated with the local culture as many forms of indigenous education. There is a sense in which the apprentice is understood to ‘leave’ in order to learn and then to come back again. The conceptual distance of this ‘leaving’ may not be as great as that incurred with formal schooling, but it can be substantial, particularly if the apprenticeship requires moving away from one’s home area.

There are many different forms and levels of apprenticeship in Africa. There are many informal apprenticeships in which basic skills “can be acquired more or less rapidly on the job” (King 1977: 49). These may involve the payment of fees to a master who will train one or two trainees. An important feature is the trainee’s quick movement through the training, after which he may be incorporated into a co-operative type of arrangement or he may go elsewhere to look for work or self-employment (King 1977: 50-52).

James Omoding-Okwalinga carried out a study of rural off-farm occupational learning in Pallisa, eastern Uganda. He chose four occupations: carpenters, blacksmiths, pot makers, and rope makers. He found in all four samples that learning by apprenticeship to a family member was the most characteristic mode of occupational skill learning. Second was apprenticeship to a relative; third was self-

⁵⁰ For a different African critique of indigenous education’s emphasis upon action, instead of upon recall and articulation, see Brennan (1990) and Mushi (1989).

learning, which entailed observation and then practice; and fourth was apprenticeship to a non-relative (Omoding-Okwalinga 1991: 78).

One potential drawback to this system is that the quality of skills learned is often limited. The 'master' may not have had any formal training other than his own apprenticeship, and even if he did attend a vocational school somewhere, the theoretical education he received may not relate practically to the actual skills he uses for his living. To put it another way, the master may not have fully mastered the skill himself.

Bad habits reproduce themselves through generations of sloppy workers. They set the level of the local technology and the limits to what can be done with it. This is the vicious circle that neither apprenticeship nor cheap and amateurish vocational training can break. Technical schools, no matter how expensive, are not the solution either, since they do not prepare craftsmen but academics with rudiments of manual work (Castro 1999: 26).

There has been a very successful apprenticeship system in some European countries, particularly in Germany, which provides theory, practice and employment all together. Germans have used considerable money and persuasion to try to export their highly effective apprenticeship system to developing countries, but without great success (Boehm 1994: 6659; Kempner et al. 1993: 174). There are several reasons for this. First, the apprenticeship programme in Germany is financially supported by a flourishing industrial sector (Boehm 1994: 6659). Africa also has an abundant inexpensive labour force. This often makes it uneconomical for businesses to invest in the formal quality training of apprentices, who will then demand higher wages and bring with them a lot of government red tape. Finally, "In Africa, the traditional educational system fosters a collective and lifelong apprenticeship system in which 'big brothers' in the subsequent age group help initiate their juniors into successive stages of development" (Kempner et al. 1993: 382-383).

Our comparative review enables us to conclude tentatively that good ideas require considerable adaptation to work in a different cultural milieu, rather than the wholesale import of European solutions inappropriate for African traditions. Successful imports are those that follow local proclivities and improve on them, rather than replace them. Local conditions, attitudes and values have to be taken into account to avoid head-on collisions with mores and habits. Certainly, the most promising experiments are those that

try to improve the educational system incrementally. Going against the cultural grain is too risky (Kempner et al. 1993: 389).

Apprenticeship is in common use throughout Africa. It does not take on the same form as that found in European countries for good reason. It is shaped instead by the African cultural, indigenous and political life context.

Recognition of the role of orally-based indigenous knowledge, literacies and education in the personal formation of adults who engage in theological education and learning can be transformational not only for learners, but for adult theological education schemes as well. This is critically important for adults who engage in learning with little formal education experience. Adult education must situate itself to facilitate the use of these indigenous knowledges and education patterns in effective and progressive learning. At the same time, care must be taken not to romanticise indigenous education systems and patterns of learning. Although they may fundamentally influence how many adults learn who have minimal formal education, formal schooling has also become an integral and desired part of the societal and educational landscape in Africa (Foster 1969: 92-93, 100-101).

These critical issues address the role and place of adult education in Uganda, but they point to an even more essential element which is intricately and integrally interwoven into all of them and which influences not only the place of adult education, but also its very shape and form. That element is the fundamental interplay between orality and literacy. In fact, the recurrent educational concerns that were elicited through the historical analysis as well as the political economy, the problem of dual knowledges and local versus global dynamics all lead to the interface between orality and literacy.

Literacy and orality interact with each other throughout a person's lifetime. They are fundamental aspects of the life-context described above. Consequently, they influence one's approach to working with knowledge and to learning new knowledge to the core. The dynamic interplay between the two can be observed in indigenous knowledge and education systems, in the motives that inspire the desire for further education and in the variety of learning styles found among adult learners. The fundamental influence that culture exerts upon learning, as examined in this chapter,

raises the question of the cultural value accredited to both oral and written forms of working with knowledge. The concept of wisdom in Uganda, which describes a person holistically rather than academically and which contrasts book learning with the fully educated person, exposes the relative importance and interdependence of orality and literacy in adult learning in the Ugandan context. The following section will address the critical and essential educational dynamics unleashed by these two complementary yet competitive forces in pursuit of the ownership of knowledge.

ORALITY AND LITERACY: THE DYNAMICS OF MUTUAL ENRICHMENT

When literacy invades the realm of orality, a dynamic interaction between the two is unleashed with complex and formidable consequences. Uganda is reverberating with the confluence of these dynamic forces at the present.⁵¹ This process is not a singular event in the development of a people but is more properly understood as a constant process of change and a catalyst for the formulation of knowledge in all societies.

The transition from a primarily oral society to a fundamentally literate society was very slow in the West (Ong 1982: 115). Africa is now experiencing these changes at an accelerated rate. In 1986 58% of the population in Uganda over 15 years of age were illiterate. By 1998 that number had dropped to 38.2% (Uganda Government 2000: 6.4) and to 35.5% by 2000 (Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2002).⁵² Such change has alternatively been portrayed as transformational, disruptive, disjunctive, or simply as a natural developmental process.

⁵¹ This will be evidenced in data from the fieldwork in chapter five, but has also been experienced by the researcher during his years of living in Uganda. There is an evident tension between doing things the 'old' way (such as orally-based discussions) or the 'new' way (such as literacy-based posting of notices or public reading of notices).

⁵² Even with such improvement in literacy rates, Uganda is only ranked 141 out of 162 nations in the education index of the UNDP's human development index (UNDP 2001: 143). As will be noted in chapter four, the collection of accurate statistics in Uganda is difficult. Therefore, statistical percentages are used in this thesis to portray trends. One should not assume that these are exact representations of actual literacy rates.

Orality and literacy are often conceptualised as two ends of a continuum. On one side is the idealised orally-based society which has no understanding of or contact with writing. On the other end is the highly technicised world of print and electronic media. Such a linear concept may convey progress as movement edging away from orality and towards literacy. Reflection and higher cognitive processes are considered to be enabled by reading and writing (Goody 1987; Havelock 1991; Narasimhan 1991; Ong 1982). Orality-based learning is, by inference, branded as “second-class” (Pattanayak 1991: 105).

The oral – literate continuum is seen as reflecting a relative focus on involvement and content respectively (Tannen 1982: 2-4). Narasimhan refers to the “real world” within which orality functions and the “modelled world” of academia. Between these two is a large group of people who move back and forth between the real world and more or less modelled versions of it (Narasimhan 1991: 185-186).

The divergent characteristics of orality and written communication are evidenced by their respective position vis-à-vis their audiences. Speaking requires conscious involvement with an audience. Writing, on the other hand, is done in a detached manner. In fact, the writer will often retreat into solitude in order to put words to paper. The connection with the audience or reader is distanced and the focus is on communicating content. “Speakers interact with their audiences, writers do not” (Chafe 1982: 45). The advent of the printing press, coupled with the economic growth of the twentieth century and the explosion of the electronic media onto the scene have pushed writing even further along the continuum and away from the interpersonal character of speech (Scribner 1997a: 166). Words become objects, rarefied in space.

The distanced content-laden character of writing and literacy, when contrasted with the interpersonal involvement of orality raises questions about its impact upon society as orality gives way to literacy.⁵³ Although literacy is perceived to encourage

⁵³ Internet chat rooms have created a form of conversational writing which has, admittedly, altered this contrast. The theological students and institutions represented in this study did not have access to the internet, however. The high cost of computer hardware and of telecommunications in Uganda

reflection by literacy-based societies, it may actually inhibit reflective thought and encourage a simple transfer of knowledge among learners steeped in oral learning. Adult learners, in this context, require “new techniques” (Kabuga 1974: 3) which will enable them to move beyond knowledge transfer to knowledge ownership.

When a primarily oral society adopts a literacy-based educational approach, the potential for societal friction and disruption may be substantial. As learners increasingly look to written texts as the sources of knowledge, the elders, who had been considered the “embodiment of wisdom”, may be progressively by-passed as “those who have not ‘kept up’” (Goody 1982: 213). Without denying the inherent differences between orality and literacy, it may be argued that the complexities of oral thought, creativity and reflection have been undervalued by the proponents of literacy. Although writing provides an important opportunity for reflective and critical thought, similar critical patterns may be observed within oral traditions (Feldman 1991: 50). Conceptualisations of ‘progress’ have amazing power to influence thinking. Logic and scientific positivism, heavily influenced by evolutionary theory, have moulded the Western mind to think in linear rather than global, cyclical or interactive terms. Post-modernism and post-structuralism have contributed to the breakdown of this overly simplistic approach to life, but have offered little to replace it.

Contrary to popular preconceptions, primarily oral societies which are increasingly becoming literate may not exemplify linear movement so much as the dynamic interaction between literacy and orality. The infusion of literacy into orality creates a dynamic force that bursts beyond the bounds of the continuum into a lively interplay between the two, changing and preserving both of them in strategic ways. The image of a single continuum must become a multi-dimensional or shattered continuum if it is to convey this dynamic process. (Fig. 2:1) The conceptualisation of the infusion of orality by literacy also enables the visualisation of dynamism more appropriately than a single linear continuum. (Fig. 2:2) Thus, it may not be necessary for orality

militates strongly against such access. The role of the Internet in reducing the conceptual distance between the written and the spoken word would be an interesting area for future research.

to decrease in importance, but rather to be remoulded and reshaped even as it reshapes literacy.

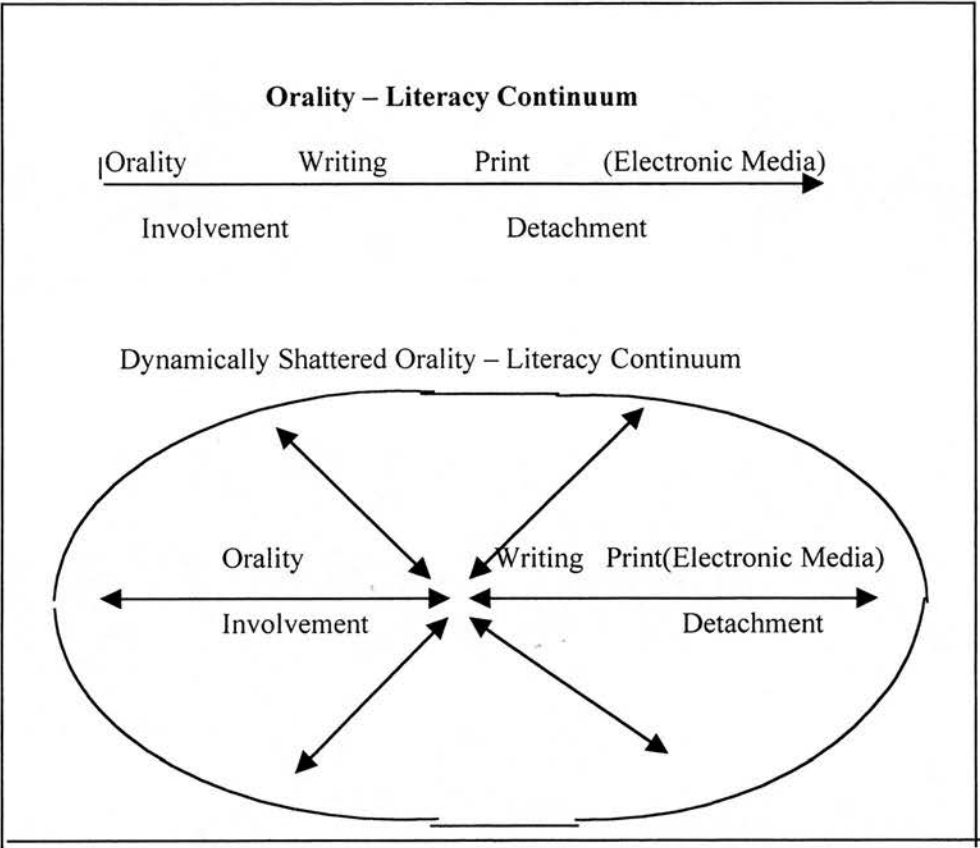


Figure 2:1

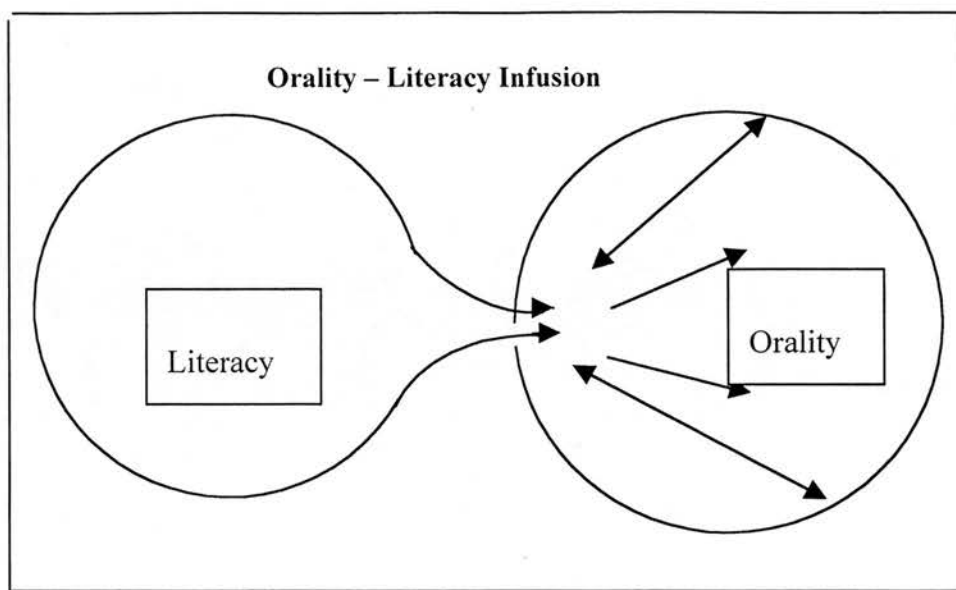


Figure 2:2

The infusion of literacy into orality means that neither of them can remain static and unchanged. The detachment and objectification of writing and print, when placed alongside the involvement and immediacy of orality, create beneficial stresses which promote change. This interplay between orality and literature in the African context has been termed “interdiscursivity” by Quayson (Quayson 1997: 16). This term removes the linear conceptual framework and replaces it by a far more interactive and dynamic process as literacy and orality influence and inform each other. This ‘conversation’ between the two is characterised by interaction and interplay, rather than by separation or delineation.

Another benefit of the term ‘interdiscursivity’ is that it moves the orality - literacy debate out of the purely technical realm into the realm of culture. This is not to deny their technical and cognitive influence, but to recognise the tremendous influence of culture upon the way in which orality and literacy are used to formulate knowledge as well. In Quayson’s analysis of transformations in Nigerian writing, he says,

...the crucial point has to be made that orality has to be taken as a cultural rather than as merely a technological concept. For, the means by which people remember are ultimately tied to important cultural forms of coding.

...It is not for nothing, therefore, that the traditional culture portrayed in a work such as Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is never mistaken for a Japanese one. It is not just that the novel mimetically invokes Igbo forms of oral discourse, it also imitates a general cultural discursivity (Quayson 1997: 14-15).

This cultural aspect of orality, and one might add literacy as well, must be understood in order to grasp the way in which these factors influence and are influenced by the whole of life's experience.

Culture influences forms of orality and literacy among all peoples. Everyone is born into an oral world. The orality of childhood may then be infused with literacy to varying degrees, depending on one's culture. Individuals may also choose to blend orality and literacy in creative ways, as is seen in African literature. Julien reveals African authors' deliberate and conscious use of oral forms in their writing as expertise in the use of culture and tradition to produce literature that is reflective of Africa itself (Julien 1992: 45).

Current studies of literacy in practice emphasise that oral and written forms are effectively interdependent. Simple dichotomies between oral and written cultures (Goody 1968b; Goody 1987; Goody and Watt 1968) cannot account for the effective interdependence of orality and literacy (Barton 1994: 83; Heath 1983: 231). Factors such as a community's sociocultural makeup powerfully influence its approach to literacy (Heath 1983). These enable people to 'take hold' of literacy in varied and innovative ways. Such variety was evidenced in a South African study that examined the reasons for the eventual disappearance of male story telling that followed learning how to read and write. The interplay between the literate culture and the oral culture was found to be "jagged, unpredictable and uneven" (Prinsloo 1995: 456). It suggested that initially orality transformed literacy, but eventually, with the influence of colonial coercion, literate government and schooling, written literacy culture gained dominance. Similarly, Kulick and Stroud's research in Papua New Guinea revealed that "individuals in a newly literate society, far from being passively transformed by literacy, instead actively and creatively applied literate skills to suit their own purposes and needs" (Kulick and Stroud 1993: 31). "The

villagers have not been 'transformed' by literacy. If anything, they themselves have 'transformed' it" (Kulick and Stroud 1993: 56).

The interface between orality and literacy has significance for the way in which literature may be used within different contexts for the critical and creative development of knowledge. The vitality of the interplay between the two is more dynamic and more true to life experience than the concept of linear movement in one direction suggests. The infusion of literacy into orality may be less like a cancer that destroys the host while growing itself and more like a stimulant which enhances the host's ability to succeed in new ways. Pattanayak phrases it well:

In these debates what is missed is the fact that literacy is a strategy for excellence. It is not as though to be nonliterate is to be nonhuman or uncivilized. What has to be seen is the extent and nature of rationality of the illiterate and the nonliterate and then to show how literateness qualitatively widens and enriches it (Pattanayak 1991: 105).

THEOLOGY AS ORAL AND WRITTEN

When literacy is infused into an oral culture in the context of adult theological education the inevitability of friction seems apparent. Christianity, particularly conservative Christianity, maintains that the canon of scripture is inspired by God. A text, the Bible, becomes the centrepiece of theological discussion and knowledge; yet the learners exist within a predominantly oral culture.⁵⁴ This is the situation in Uganda. Theological students are expected to interact with a sacred text while their dominant culture is not based on written texts.

That which separates Christianity from other major world religions, however, is that the "Word" of the Bible is not only text but also a person.⁵⁵ John (1:14) states that

⁵⁴ Protestantism largely eschews symbols and festivals such as those associated with the Ascension and Pentecost in the Roman Catholic and Orthodox traditions. This further accentuates the text over other dimensions of life.

⁵⁵ This differentiates, for example, Christianity from Islam. Mohammed, as Islam's greatest prophet, conveyed Allah's words which were, in turn, written down. The Bible claims however, that Christ *is* the Word. He was not just a prophet, but the very incarnation of God. Both Mohammed and Jesus claimed to speak for God, but only Jesus claimed to be God (John 1:1; 8:58; 10:30), the word lived.

the Word (Jesus) became flesh and dwelt among us. It is this dual meaning of the “Word” in scripture which may hold the key to unlocking the written text to theological students in an oral society. Christ is the Word lived. The gospels are narratives which were written to be read, often orally, in the church. The “Word of God” is simultaneously both text and person. Walter Ong highlights the importance of this very issue for the Christian faith.

In Christian teaching, orality-literacy polarities are particularly acute, probably more acute than in any other religious tradition, even the Hebrew. For in Christian teaching the Second Person of the One Godhead, who redeemed mankind from sin, is known not only as the Son but also as the Word of God. In this teaching, God the Father utters or speaks His Word, his Son. He does not inscribe him. The very Person of the Son is constituted as the Word of the Father. Yet Christian teaching also presents at its core the written word of God, the bible, which, back of its human authors, has God as author. ...In what way are the two senses of God’s ‘word’ related to one another and to human beings in history? The question is more focused today than ever before (Ong 1982: 179).

The “Word” is made even more available to orally-based societies in that Jesus taught that the Father would send the “Comforter” who would remind his followers of him and his teaching (John 14:16; 16:7). This Comforter is the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity. The rapid spread of Pentecostalism in Africa may be an evidence of the preference for the oral gospel, understood as being communicated through the Spirit, over the written text of the gospel.⁵⁶ If Christian theologising is to be done by Ugandans themselves, organising and formulating Christian truth as relevant to their own culture, the dynamic potential of the interaction between orality and literacy must be implemented in order to delve interdiscursively into both the personal (‘oral’) and written “Word” of the faith.

⁵⁶ Pentecostalism generally emphasises the direct work and communication of the Holy Spirit within the life of the believer. This emphasis reveals a valuing of oral, person to person communication. Pentecostal believers can be found in most denominations and now number about 5,010,000 believers in Uganda (Barrett et al. 2001: 762).

CONCLUSION

The historical development of modern literacy-based education in Uganda, as examined in chapter one, and adult⁵⁷ learning patterns that are strongly influenced by traditional learning systems and cultural approaches to working with knowledge create a complex web of potentially conflicting approaches to education. The traditional value placed on orality in Uganda and the critical influence oral systems exert on learning styles among adults are in dynamic tension as literacy-based learning and skills continue to penetrate Ugandan orality. The result is not a simple linear progression along a continuum from orality to literacy. Rather, a powerful interaction between the two is unleashed, dynamically influencing all aspects of the learner's world and challenging the learner's interpretive and critical skills.

In this distinctive setting, transformative theological education for adults in Uganda needs to situate itself strategically in order to espouse engagement and avoid estrangement. The simple adoption or adaptation of either the formal or the radical traditions as developed in the North disregards the essential context of adult education in Uganda. Locating itself effectively and advantageously requires careful analysis of the political economy which helps to shape the Ugandan education experience. This includes societal values such as national identity and nation building. The complexity of functioning within dual knowledges and developing a meta-level understanding of their respective systems of thought places great challenges before the adult learner in Uganda. These local and global influences must be equally valued and recognised. Additionally, theological education needs to acknowledge the issue of learning styles that are shaped by culture and indigenous learning systems or knowledge systems as well as by factors such as life history and psychology.

If Christian theology is to be owned by Ugandans, the energy of both orality and literacy must be utilised interdiscursively to discover and unleash meaning in the Biblical text. The search for meaning in this vibrant interface raises the question of

⁵⁷ In the context of this study, this refers to adults with limited formal education.

where meaning resides and how it is discerned by adult learners in Uganda. The essential role of orality and literacy in the processing, interpreting and understanding of knowledge must be discerned. The following chapter will examine the ways in which the formative environment of the adult, developed through the cultural and political settings examined in this chapter, influences his approach to learning and his search for meaning. Discourse theory will serve as a window into this complex linguistic and cultural world of multiple knowledges. This will be followed by an examination of hermeneutics, the art and science of interpretation, which provides a theoretical framework for making sense of the search for meaning in both oral and written contexts.

Chapter Three

DISCOURSE, CRITICAL LITERACY AND HERMENEUTICS: IN PURSUIT OF OWNERSHIP

The pursuit of the ownership of knowledge in Uganda forces the search for an approach to literacy which validates orality, enables indigenous learning patterns to inform practice and demystifies the search for meaning. Transformative education must be sought through a holistic approach to learning that recognises the formative nature of culture, history, community and orality upon one's use and manipulation of knowledge. These must be bridged to the literacy-based knowledge being pursued, enabling the interdiscursivity and meta-cognitive facility necessary for the processing and critique of such knowledge.

The objectives of literacy are usually cast in terms of its instrumental, socio-political and personal benefits. This chapter seeks to shift the objective to the development of a critical ownership of knowledge, which, if achieved, may produce any or all of these as secondary by-products. This can be achieved, it is suggested, through the use of 'discourse' to analyse and develop literacy practice, coupled with the use of hermeneutics to demystify meaning in both oral and written contexts.

In setting the ownership of knowledge as the potential objective for literacy, a fundamental shift in analysis must take place. In order to clarify that process, this chapter will begin with an overview of current literacy priorities and an analysis of the definitions and classifications which have sought to delineate the literacy debate. Three paradigmatic approaches arise out of these definitions which require careful examination. These are the technical, sociocultural and radical paradigms. Critical and discourse literacy theories will then be applied to these paradigms in an attempt to tease out a model which adequately accounts for the cultural, linguistic and oral background of adult theological learners in Uganda and which facilitates and engenders a process of knowledge ownership and development.

This analysis of discourse theory will enable an examination of the potential role of hermeneutics in facilitating ownership. Both orality and literacy depend upon the possibility of communicating meaning effectively in order to transmit, develop and critique knowledge. The possibility and use of meaning in verbal and written communication and in the production of knowledge force a consideration of the role and form of critical hermeneutics in knowledge systems. Culturally and historically derived preferences for orality and literacy critically inform not only how knowledge is processed, but also how it is communicated. Hermeneutics serves as the foundation upon which such communication is made possible. It enables the text to communicate to the learner. It promotes the learner's own interaction with the text. It makes the ownership of knowledge possible.

CURRENT LITERACY PRIORITIES

Although there has been a growing concern about literacy, or illiteracy, rates in some OECD countries, such as the United States and Britain, most international literacy interest and programmes are focused on developing countries. It is in the context of these emerging economies with high illiteracy rates and traditionally limited schooling provision that literacy's central issues become most evident. The developing world's inherent and dramatic contrasts provide a clarifying force for this debate (Bown 1977). Uganda offers a good example. In Uganda, substantial economic challenges and potential are juxtaposed against a population that has great educational needs and diversity. All of this is then set in the context of an emergent political system. The meaning, purposes and consequences of literacy in such a setting are starkly apparent.

With the emergence of many new nations changing the world's political landscape, the 1960s saw the historic beginnings of a world-wide campaign for literacy, the Experimental World Literacy Programme (EWLP) (UNDP 1976).⁵⁸ The EWLP related literacy directly to national priorities while still maintaining the concept of

⁵⁸ Bown notes that this was historic because it was the birth of international, United Nations led, campaigns against illiteracy (Bown 1977: 16).

developing permanence and use of reading, writing, and arithmetic (Muller 1973: 6). The optimism that by maintaining the momentum, adult literacy would radically alter development, particularly in the developing nations (International Council for Adult Education 1979), was soon tempered by the complexities of implementation (Lauglo 2001: 12-13, 24; Muller 1973: 3). Yet, the 1976 International Conference on Adult Education and Development held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, encouraged an important conceptual and geo-political shift in which developing nations prioritised “education for development centred on humanity, on liberation, on participation and on justice...” (International Conference on Adult Education and Development 1976).⁵⁹ In a survey of participants at the “Co-operating for Literacy” conference held in Berlin, 1983, more than 50% of those representing developing countries were satisfied with the concept of “literacy as a political tool for liberation” while more than 60% of representatives from OECD countries were not convinced that this was helpful (Horlemann and Muller 1983). Some Northern-based educators with a world perspective did promote the developmental aspects of adult education, however.

Just as Development should lie at the heart of all programmes of adult education, so at the heart of every true Development programme there lies a process of educating and training adults (Rogers 1992: 3).

Rogers goes on to stress that education is a process of changing attitudes as well as providing knowledge and skills. In this process teachers “help others to learn, to change”, which is developmental (Rogers 1992: 3).

As noted in chapter one, the 1990s witnessed a reprioritising in literacy provision away from adult literacy in favour of literacy training of children through primary education even though EFA documents maintained all people should have access to basic education and literacy (UNICEF 1999; UNICEF 2000). The goal of free primary education has been the rallying cry. Singularity of focus has added to the potential for success of such a movement. However, among the first victims have

⁵⁹ Interestingly, Mwalimu’s influence on learning in Tanzania was evidenced in a 1967 survey of students at the University College, Dar es Salaam. Tanzanian students cited the usefulness of a job to the development of the country as the most important factor to consider when choosing a job (Barkan 1968: 27).

been youth and adult literacy programmes (Limage 1999: 76). Uganda claims only one indigenous NGO focused on the promotion of adult literacy, Literacy and Adult Basic Education (LABE) (Bown et al. 2000: viii). There has been an accompanying reticence on the part of national, bilateral and international donor agencies to support adult literacy programmes (Lauglo 2001: 12; Wagner 1995: 342).

With the launch of UPE in Uganda in 1997, primary enrolment figures increased from 2.5 million in 1997 to 6.5 million three years later (Elwana 2000). This has required a huge financial commitment on the part of the government, which increased its expenditure on education from Ush 44 billion in 1996 to Ush 136 billion in 1998. By the year 2000, 62% of total public expenditure on education was used for primary education (Uganda Government 2000: 5.3).

Still, adult literacy, “as part of a strategy to offset inequality, enlarge people’s choices and realise human rights,” has been encouraged by the government (Bown and Mayatsa 1998: vii). Through FAL, the government is targeting rural populations, particularly women, in the endeavour to increase literacy levels to 90% by the end of the current 2001-2006 FALSIP plan (Uganda Government 2001: 1).⁶⁰ The civil society response to FAL has suggested that this is an overly optimistic target, especially since Uganda’s literacy rate is now the lowest in East Africa, whereas in the 1960s, it was the highest (LitNet 2001: 2). An evaluation of literacy programmes revealed that participants in FAL perform equivalently to participants in REFLECT circles after controlling for the level of prior schooling. Yet, FAL is in danger of losing momentum, because it relies almost entirely on volunteers. In addition, government funding has been decreasing in relative terms, from 50% to 30%, against donor funding (Okech et al. 2001: xviii-xx). Government reports state that from 1990 to June 1999, total government expenditure for adult education in Uganda reached U.S. dollars 2,225,000 (Uganda Government 1999a: 14). However, with an adult illiteracy rate of 35.5% of the adult population, literacy remains a major area of educational need (Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2002).

⁶⁰ These are funded through the Poverty Action Fund (PAF) under the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) (Uganda Government 2001: 2).

DEFINITIONS OF LITERACY

Two clarifications to the usage of the term literacy are necessary at this point. First, it is important to remember that literacy is not directly correspondent to schooling or education. Some adults who have had the benefit of schooling are still barely literate and others, with very low schooling levels, have remarkably high literacy (Darville 1999: 278). Ability may correspond more to actual use of literacy, either personally or on the job, than to levels of schooling. Secondly, the traditional dichotomy between literate and illiterate can no longer account for the variety of skill levels and usages of literacy that form a literacy matrix in contemporary society (Wagner 1995: 350). Evident world-wide concern for literacy proficiency levels in all countries has led to increased research and a developing web of theories that attempt to clarify and understand the complexities of literacy.

An overview of attempts to define literacy highlights both its complex nature and the development of theory which attempts to account for such complexity. The traditional standard view of literacy is notable for its simplicity. In this view, literacy is the ability or skill of the individual to read, write and do basic maths.⁶¹ The widespread functional use of literacy by neo-liberal capitalism today is based upon this traditional definition of literacy, as will be seen below.

A second set of definitions turns around the sociocultural dimensions of using reading and writing. Literacy, then, is defined by its form and use within particular localities. It becomes a “shorthand for the social practices and conceptions of reading and writing” (Street 1984: 1). It is understood as “a set of social practices” (Barton and Hamilton 1998: 8) or as the “actual literacy” used for development in a particular setting (Martin and Rahman 2001: 123).

⁶¹ The importance of the ability to record thoughts and histories and then to refer to them as historical reference points, as well as to learn through this recording of knowledge, was acclaimed in the influential essay entitled “The Consequences of Literacy” (Goody and Watt 1968). The fact that this article has produced such a tremendous backlash in academic circles is evidence of its powerful influence.

A third set of definitions of literacy move beyond social setting and practice to literacy as agency. In this sense, literacy acts out of society and culture but also acts upon it, changing and transforming the world. It is the “praxis” of Freire applied to literacy (Freire 1972: 60), in which the word is accompanied by action and in the process the action transforms both the word and the world. This view of literacy is popular, political and active. It seeks to empower people to gain control over their own lives and society.

The value of writing, speaking and listening should not be seen as access to ‘refined culture’ or to ‘life skills’ for our allotted ... places in the paid and unpaid labour market, but as a crucial means to gain power and control over our entire lives (Apple 1993: 193).

These definitions and descriptions portray a complex theoretical matrix which mirrors the diversity found in the actual uses of literacy. Each of these definitions describes a valid, yet not exclusive, dimension of literacy (Scribner 1997b: 214).

In the attempt to make sense out of this vast domain, many forms of categorisation or conceptualisation of literacy have been proposed.⁶² Alan Rogers suggests that there are three paradigms which have dominated the field of literacy since the 1950s. He organises these chronologically beginning with what he terms the technical paradigm that focuses on neutral skills associated with reading and writing. Secondly he notes the paradigm associated with Paulo Freire which states that literacy can never be neutral, but will be, of necessity, either ‘domesticating’ or ‘liberating’. Thirdly, he notes the development of “the new literacy studies,” which he terms the “socio-cultural paradigm” (Rogers 1995: 339).

⁶² Reflecting his technical approach to literacy, Wagner classifies literacy according to four skill levels: non-literate, low literate, moderate literate, and high literate (Wagner 1995: 352). Looking at adult basic education in Britain, Mary Hamilton notes four distinct “strands”. These are literacy for emancipation, literacy for social control, cultural missionary activity (a means of maintaining accepted cultural norms of good and bad or high and low culture), and the deficit model (for those needing remedial help) (Hamilton 1996: 148-149). Alternatively, literacy may be conceptualised in terms of four metaphors: literacy as skills, literacy as tasks, literacy as practices and literacy as critical reflection” (Walter 1999: 33).

This chapter will follow Rogers in organising literacy theory around these three paradigms. However, here these three paradigms will be organised along a conceptual continuum rather than a chronological one. In this respect, the sociocultural or ‘new literacy studies’ paradigm is located theoretically between the technical and the radical⁶³ paradigms. This conceptual or theoretical mapping of the literacy domain assists in effectively analysing the development and process of literacy theory. Finally, the question of the ownership of knowledge will be critically placed against this theoretical backdrop in an attempt to illuminate essential dimensions of literacy theory through the study of discourse and critical literacy.

THE TECHNICAL PARADIGM

The traditional understanding of literacy was based upon the acquisition of the technical skills required for reading, writing, and numeracy. The world was divided into those who had these skills, the literate, and those who did not, the illiterate. Levels of literacy were defined according to the categories or difficulties of literature which could be read and produced. This approach to literacy continues to influence literacy theory and thought.

Goody’s extensive historical analysis of the development of the “technology of the intellect” (Goody 1968a: 25) as a consequence of reading and writing has underpinned the theoretical stance of this paradigm.

In oral societies the cultural tradition is transmitted almost entirely by face-to-face communication; and changes in its content are accompanied by the homeostatic process of forgetting or transforming those parts of the tradition that cease to be either necessary or relevant. Literate societies, on the other hand, cannot discard, absorb, or transmute the past in the same way. Instead, their members are faced with permanently recorded versions of the past and its beliefs; and because the past is thus set apart from the present, historical enquiry becomes possible...The kinds of analysis involved in the syllogism, and in the other forms of logical procedure, are clearly dependent upon writing, indeed upon a form of writing sufficiently simple and cursive to make possible widespread and habitual recourse both to the recording of verbal statements and then to the dissecting of them (Goody and Watt 1968: 67-68).

⁶³ The terms ‘radical’, ‘emancipatory’ and ‘popular’ will be used interchangeably.

This form of argument resulted in the categorisations of societies as non-literate or literate, and pre-logical or logical. Historically, this has sometimes resulted in the use of literacy as a definer of class, with analytic and classical thought reserved for the elite. Below this elite, the simple reading of directions or directives distinguished the functionally literate from the illiterate.

The desire for nation building and the promotion of functional literacy as essential for economic development stimulated the view in post-independence sub-Saharan Africa that the skills of reading, writing and arithmetic would naturally lead to individual and national progress. It is enlightening to read the proceedings of the African Adult Education Association conference on Continuing Literacy which was held at Makerere University in 1968. With representatives of newly independent African nations present, a prevailing theme was the benefits which literacy would bring to nation building and productivity. The following words come from the opening address, which was given by Richard Katongole, the then Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Culture and Community Development in Uganda:

We realise generally that literacy tends to make the beneficiary more receptive and better integrated in the social and professional environment, giving him a stronger sense of participation and an ability to assimilate new techniques and ideas which are in themselves factors conducive to higher productivity, a goal which all developing countries are struggling to achieve (Katongole 1968: 17).

The emphasis on literacy which enables citizens to “assimilate new ideas and techniques” that foster “productivity” is drawn naturally from the ‘functional’ literacy stance and encourages societal formation for the sake of nation building and development.

Through the 1980s, the neo-liberal capitalists co-opted this paradigm for their new discourse which promoted investment in human resources or human capital. People were portrayed in economic terms, as components of the greater and expanding world economy. “Talk was of literacy skills, rather than wider knowledge or practices; training rather than education; and literacy and numeracy were linked into wider discourses about national training and economic needs and the development of functional competences” (Hamilton 1996: 160). The economic rationale became an

“article of faith” among advocates of literacy programmes (Wagner 1995: 345). The belief was based on the presupposition that higher levels of literacy in the North had led to higher levels of development.

The use of the technical literacy paradigm in support of nation building is extremely relevant in light of the EFA emphasis during the 1990s. Nation building is an important ingredient fostering the support of many governments today for literacy programmes (Wagner 1995: 346). The report of the Ugandan Government’s Education Policy Review Commission (1992) exemplifies this concern for nation building and the need for “modern productive skills and techniques”. Yet interestingly, the goals of literacy are stretched beyond a purely technicist approach to incorporate ethics, values, and morality.

All literacy work will be deliberately geared towards the achievement and maintenance of permanent and developmental functional literacy in the whole country. ...

Government believes that in addition to these, skills, ethics, values, morality and a progressive outlook should also be inculcated and developed through post-literacy adult education. Government’s view is that such education would lead to the consolidation of democracy, higher productivity, and a rise in people’s standards of living in this country, apart from inculcating a sense of patriotism and obligation to contribute towards the security of property, citizens and Uganda, as well as the unity, stability and rapid development of the country (Uganda Government 1992: 178-179 [emphasis in original]).

The government has modified ‘nation building’ in FAL to focus upon the development of community capacity (Uganda Government 2001: 2-3). Still, the emphasis upon education, particularly that of UPE and FAL, in Uganda, is stimulated by the expectation that increased literacy rates will fuel the development of the nation (Bown et al. 2000: x). Uganda is well beyond the euphoria and high hopes that accompanied independence, having had to bear the devastating results of poor governments during the 1970s and the first half of the 1980s. A greater realism and pragmatism characterise the present government’s efforts to build a sense of nationhood and to lay the foundations for growth.

The relationship between literacy and nationalism must be examined carefully. In Street’s words, “literacy frequently subserves the interests of national politics”

(Street 1993: 1). This is not necessarily inappropriate, but the nationalistic forces behind the drive for literacy should be recognised. An early example of this is evident in another speech presented at the Continuing Literacy conference at Makerere in 1968, this time dealing with the preparation of follow-up materials for literacy programmes.

In my opinion the follow-up materials must be directed to convey to the new literate new ideas, help him change his attitudes, increase his reading ability and writing skills, and above all create in him the qualities of the good citizen who knows his duties and rights, who can participate more effectively in the development of his community, and fit in the life of nation, as well as to help him to be a good and productive worker whatever his vocation may be. Moreover, the follow-up materials should play a very important role in fostering the national unity and the solidarity of the nation (Omer 1968: 24).

The emphasis upon 'duties and rights,' 'productivity,' and 'national unity' stands out clearly in these comments. Although the vocabulary of choice may have changed, the same spirit is still found today in much of the world.

South Africa is an example of a country struggling with the meaning of literacy as it undergoes tremendous political and social change. There is a need for redress of injustice and for the education of a large percentage of the population that was deprived of a fair education under the former apartheid regime. With the largest economy in the region, there is at the same time, the need to maintain competitiveness and open the job market to all citizens of the country. At the beginning of this transition, Prinsloo noted the dominant starting point or paradigm under consideration.

Attempts at national curriculum construction, even those that aim to draw from state-of-the-art understanding of development and development strategies start from analyses of what people need to know – to be responsible citizens, critical consumers, flexibly-skilled workers, eco-friendly community members – rather than grounded, detailed, diversified understandings of where people already are and where they want to go (Prinsloo 1995: 448).⁶⁴

⁶⁴ South Africa has re-emphasised the social benefits of literacy alongside its instrumental value since the second democratic elections. When, in 1999, Kader Asmal became Minister of Education in

Governments and companies alike look to literacy to provide technological competence which will lead to productivity and national development (Tuijnman 1997).

The reduction of literacy to technical skills competency which yields productivity has many detractors. "It is not much more helpful than saying that a person is a musician if she can play a simple tune" (Bown 1990: 10). The relationship between development and 'intellectual competence' remains problematic (Street 1984: 185). Despite the potentially progressive appeal of this utilitarian approach to literacy, "such an approach emphasises the mechanical learning of reading skills while sacrificing the critical analysis of the social and political order that generates the need for reading in the first place" (Freire and Macedo 1987: 146-147). Within the current form of this paradigm, Ian Martin delineates two discourses which are at work: one which constructs the adult learner as worker or producer and another which constructs the adult learner as customer or consumer. He says,

These discourses are fundamentally economistic in the sense that they posit at the centre of our conception of lifelong learning the idea that human beings are essentially economic animals: our purpose – or, to put it rather more grandly in Freire's terms, our 'ontological vocation' – is to produce and consume, and to have rather than to be (Martin 1999a: 16-17).

The attractiveness of the technical literacy paradigm may rest in its simplicity. Literacy is the skill to read, write and do mathematical calculations. It is relatively simple to distinguish between levels of competency and to produce statistical data.⁶⁵ Finally, this paradigm seems to provide the resources for economic development.

However, its great weakness is its one-dimensional view of literacy. It cannot account for the tremendous variety of uses and forms of literacy which are apparent within society. It reduces literacy to individualistic skills, devoid of societal

South Africa, he described the educational condition of the majority of people in his country as a national emergency. One of the five core programmes designed to address this crisis is called the National Literacy Initiative. The emphasis is focused clearly on literacy rather than on ABE in general (Lee 2000: 366-382).

⁶⁵ Examples of such surveys are the American National Adult Literacy Survey or the simpler household survey model of the UN (Wagner 1995: 351-352).

influence and formation. The technical paradigm of literacy tends to use people, instead of enabling people to use it. These glaring and potentially dangerous inadequacies have led to the development of the second major literacy paradigm: the sociocultural paradigm.

THE SOCIOCULTURAL PARADIGM

The sociocultural paradigm finds literacy firmly embedded within the societal and cultural pattern of particular localities and of distinct groups within these localities. It is an attempt to recognise that literacy belongs to the community, not just the individual. It acknowledges that literacy is diverse as it is formed by people and that it therefore must reflect different sociocultural influences. Brian Street laid the theoretical groundwork for this perspective in his book *Literacy in Theory and Practice*. He rejected the assumption of the technical paradigm, which he called the “autonomous model of literacy”, that literacy is a “neutral technology” (Street 1984: 1). He posed, instead, an “ideological” model, which has spearheaded the sociocultural paradigm of literacy.

Those who subscribe to this model concentrate on the specific social practices of reading and writing. They recognise the ideological and therefore culturally embedded nature of such practices. The model stresses the significance of the socialisation process in the construction of the meaning of literacy for participants and is therefore concerned with the general social institutions through which this process takes place and not just the explicit ‘educational’ ones (Street 1984: 2).

Within this paradigm, literacy is no longer simply a technology which must be learned and applied in the proper way, but a social practice with observable and variable patterns of usage (Scribner 1997c: 203; Scribner and Cole 1981: 236). Simply put, it is what people actually do in their everyday activities of reading, writing and numeracy. It is a social and cultural construct which grows out of the vernacular uses, meanings and purposes attached to these practices (Hamilton 1996: 164).

Literacy is primarily something people do; it is an activity, located in the space between thought and text. Literacy does not just reside in people’s heads as a set of skills to be learned, and it does not just reside on paper, captured as texts to be analysed. Like all human activity, literacy is

essentially social, and it is located in the interaction between people (Barton and Hamilton 1998: 3).

Barton and Hamilton's fascinating study of the 'local literacies' of a small community in Britain reveals a great variety of literacy patterns among community members. Some had developed innovative means of dealing with areas where their literacy proficiency was less than optimal, but had, at the same time, excelled in other forms of literacy. Literacy patterns in different families differed from one another. Community-wide efforts accented still other complementary uses of literacy skills on the part of individuals for the good of the whole (Barton and Hamilton 1998). Such coping strategies enable individuals to operate within those literacy areas that are necessary for them, even if they do not have the formal literacy knowledge (Barton and Hamilton 1998; Prinsloo 1995: 450; Rogers 1999: 220).

Maintaining the interest and motivation level of learners, then, may be facilitated by adopting a 'real literacies' approach which addresses the specific literacy needs of particular groups within a community (Rogers 1999). "Learning for adults is always situated learning. It is always purposeful, to achieve a goal which the adults have set for themselves" (Rogers 1999: 225).

Research also reveals that some forms of literacy may be ranked with greater prestige than other forms. Barton notes that, "Literacy is socially patterned and restricted in all societies" (Barton 1994: 75). Existing social institutions maintain their respective dominant roles by limiting access to certain forms of written text. Barton suggests some questions which may lead to a greater understanding of the social placing of literacy in different settings.

Who reads and writes, and what literacies, what literacy practices, do they participate in? What are imposed literacies? Which are taught, which are accessible through education? What are the social institutions which support and sustain particular literacies? (Barton 1994: 78)

Vernacular literacies, such as those which characterise indigenous education systems, may be sources of real creativity, invention and originality. They may also embody a different set of values than the dominant literacies. Yet they are often downplayed by schools and other institutions of the dominant literacies (Barton and Hamilton 1998: 253-255). This social privileging of one literacy over another is one of the

flash points igniting radical literacy, and requires investigation within the context of theological education in Uganda.

An important contribution which the sociocultural paradigm provides is the understanding that literacy practices of particular communities and homes can dramatically influence one's approach to the written word. Reading and writing are fundamentally grounded in language, which itself is rooted in social practice where meanings are made, fixed and publicly shared in agreed patterns (Lankshear 1997: 23). These patterns vary greatly from one community to another. Although race, ethnic or linguistic differences may be the presumed causes of these different patterns in language, there are other equally important factors such as the ways in which "their respective histories, patterns of face-to-face interactions, and ways of adjusting both to the external environment and to individuals within and outside their groups have shaped their different patterns of using language" (Heath 1983: 11).

Shirley Heath's fascinating and illuminating study of three Appalachian communities over a period of seven years found that the language and communication patterns of each of these communities was different from the others. These patterns were interdependent with ways of using space (bookshelves, reading chairs, decorating) and using time (bedtime, homework sessions). These differences were evident in their approaches to reading and writing as well. She graphically contrasts these differences in two of her communities, Roadville and Trackton.

In Roadville, the absoluteness of ways of talking about what is written fits church ways of talking about what is written. Behind the written word is an authority, and the text is a message which can be taken apart only insofar as its analysis does not extend too far beyond the text and commonly agreed upon experiences. New syntheses and multiple interpretations create alternatives which challenge fixed roles, rules, and 'rightness.' In Trackton, the written word is for negotiation and manipulation – both serious and playful. Changing and changeable, words are the tools performers use to create images of themselves and the world they see. For Roadville, the written word limits alternatives of expression; in Trackton, it opens alternatives. Neither community's ways with the written word prepares it for the school's ways (Heath 1983: 234-235).

Heath reveals how these approaches grow out of the social (community, religious, and family) uses of text, both oral and written, in each of the communities. These are

literacies of practice. They reflect the primary approach of each of these communities to text. It is difficult, perhaps impossible, to rate one as superior to another. They grow out of completely different understandings of what it means to interact with oral and written texts. For students from these communities to succeed in school, which presented them with the dominant literacy, they had to learn to accept the possibility of operating within the rules of these various language systems, and to 'code switch' between systems (Heath 1983: 355). The sociocultural paradigm recognises the validity of each of these real life literacies rather than seeking to promote a single dominant literacy as the only valid approach.⁶⁶

The strength of the sociocultural paradigm is its recognition of the influence of community on language and literacy. Literacy is not just a set of skills which are individualistic and universal in use. Rather, reading, writing and numeracy take on unique patterns and values in local communities and social groups, as well as in the larger society. These different literacies are often credited with various degrees of value by the wider society and individuals will often need to learn to operate within several different literacies over time. Whereas the sociocultural paradigm recognises and values local literacies, it tends towards relativism when it simply suggests that by learning other literacies, the individual is able to increase his or her access to greater sectors of the society at large. The apparent weakness of the sociocultural approach to literacy is the distance which it maintains from issues of agency and justice, while these are the core issues driving the radical paradigm.

THE RADICAL PARADIGM

The economic utilitarianism of the technical paradigm and the emphasis upon adapting or 'code switching' between literacies as found in the sociocultural

⁶⁶ The growing interest in family literacy recognises that not only communities but even families develop literacy patterns of their own. Instead of dealing with only the child who is found to be struggling with literacy at school, family intervention could help to break the intergenerational cycle of reading failure (Lauglo 2001: 5). LABE has a new pilot programme in Bugiri, Uganda which is examining the effects of family intervention on primary children's literacy development. Although there are positive preliminary indicators, the pilot is still in progress. The danger, however, is that this could simply reinforce the view that these families are culturally deficient while under-valuing their home and community literacy patterns (Crowther and Tett 1997: 207).

paradigm insufficiently address the greater issues of justice and power according to radical theory. Empowerment, change, agency and transforming the world are the characteristics of the popular or radical literacy paradigm. It seeks to empower individuals to change the world for the better through the use of literacy. Literacies that serve to subjugate others need to be confronted and resisted.⁶⁷ The development of literacy skills should promote the inherent worth of human beings rather than simply increasing their economic value to society. Such literacy serves the oppressed in “the incessant struggle to regain their humanity” (Freire 1972: 25). Equality and justice give focus and purpose to this paradigm. Human beings are encouraged to reach their full potential individually and in society as active citizens. “It is this more holistic and civic sense of what it means to be human to which the radical tradition in adult education has always spoken with clarity and conviction” (Martin 1999a: 17). Three themes characterise dialogue within this paradigm: literacy as political, literacy as a study of power relations, and literacy as emancipatory.

In radical thinking literacy cannot be a neutral technical skill, nor can it be simply the social practice of various groupings of people. Literacy is inherently and explicitly political (Brookfield 2001: 21; Lankshear and McLaren 1993b: 10). Emancipatory literacy seeks to enable the oppressed and the marginalized of society to transform their worlds. Learning which is transformational makes sense of the learners’ world and helps them to act, collectively, in order to change it for the better (Martin 1999b: 7). This is political action from the start as it questions, disrupts and restructures what has become the dominant and accepted literacy and interpretations of society. In the words of Freire, literacy is “an eminently political phenomenon, and it must be analysed within the context of a theory of power relations and an understanding of social and cultural reproduction and production” (Freire and Macedo 1987: 143).

⁶⁷ As previously mentioned, such a sense of subjugation may be the result of being identified with an ‘inferior’ literacy, while the dominant form of literacy is protected by those who operate with it (Barton 1994: 75).

As noted earlier, the technical paradigm has been co-opted by political, social and economic forces to organise society into groupings of social strata and class. These groupings go by many names: the elite and the masses, entrepreneurs and workers, academics and commoners, the highly literate and the functionally literate. The sociocultural paradigm recognises the different literacies of each of these groupings, acknowledges the dominance and privileged status of some more than others, yet promotes the value of all literacies while seeking to enable individuals to 'code switch' between different literacies as necessary. Radical literacy recognises a moral and ethical problem at work within a society which is understood to restrict and 'use' people as a matter of course and, therefore, works to change that society.

Radical theory sees the oppressed as caught within a system which tells them that they are actually inferior people (Freire 1972: 40), while power relations are aligned to prevent them from escaping their place as the excluded of society. For them, literacy is not emancipatory in itself, but is a pre-condition of engaging in struggles of power relations (Giroux 1987: 11). When accompanied by other political and social factors, literacy can enable the oppressed to transform their world in an emancipatory way (Walter 1999: 45).

Freire's vision for liberating literacy is conveyed in his use of the term 'praxis'. Praxis is the dynamism of reflection and action in adult learning. It is what happens when the 'word' is combined with 'work' (Freire 1972: 60). This is the emancipatory and empowering dimension of radical literacy. The radical paradigm offers a refreshing emphasis upon what literacy can and should do for the benefit of the person and society at large. Rather than being utilitarian or purely analytical of actual practices of literacy, it gives purpose to literacy studies. It stands against the current and serves as a counter force to the predominant social injustices of society.

The concern for ownership of knowledge casts new light on these three paradigms, exposing the need for yet another theoretical approach to literacy. The technical paradigm provides skills to promote personal and national economic progress. Yet it may not enhance the ability of either the individual or the community to critically

analyse existing knowledge, and reformulate it so that it reflects the community which gave it birth. It provides a way to use knowledge, not to own it.⁶⁸ The sociocultural paradigm exposes literacies as actually practised in communities. Its focus is upon respecting each form of literacy and enabling people to use the appropriate literacy at the right time through 'code switching' or the development of multiple literacy skills. While providing links from local literacies to other, possibly dominant, literacies, it does not concern itself with changing them.

The radical paradigm, in contrast, seeks to transform not only the dominant literacy, but the oppressed individuals and communities, society, and even the world. It values the human being in this transformational and potentially revolutionary process. However, the very fact that popular literacy stands in opposition to the traditional forms of literacy posits the learner in a social or political 'camp' from the beginning, the 'resistance camp'. Personal ownership and formation of knowledge is not impossible from such a position, but it is complicated by the philosophical presuppositions of resistance which undergird radical literacy.

Is the ownership of knowledge, then, solely the realm of the elite who are able to control the dominant literacy of society? With the historical forces of northern colonial power and the current domination of the world economic and information systems by the North, how can the South or the developing world formulate an approach to literacy which makes knowledge their own? As examined in the previous two chapters, there is the need for an approach to literacy that consciously values and acknowledges the cultural and oral tools associated with the production of knowledge in Uganda. The pursuit of meaning and knowledge in literacy requires a hermeneutic bridge between oral and written communication. An analysis of discourse theory, in conjunction with an emphasis on critical literacy, may offer a way forward.

⁶⁸ This does not mean that knowledge cannot be owned within the technical paradigm, but rather that the paradigm's focus is upon function rather than ownership.

DISCOURSE AND CRITICAL LITERACY

Viewing literacy as socio-linguistic discourse is fundamentally different than looking at it paradigmatically. Whereas paradigms frame debate systematically into theoretical forms, discourse, as Foucault uses it, shifts the focus to the problem of power and knowledge in society (Foucault 1985: 89-91). This fundamental shift provides a potentially very beneficial perspective from which to analyse the complexities of literacy. Henry Giroux summarises this perspective as “critical literacy”:

In the broadest political sense, literacy is best understood as a myriad of discursive forms and cultural competencies that construct and make available the various relations and experiences that exist between learners and the world. In a more specific sense, critical literacy is both a narrative for agency as well as a referent for critique (Giroux 1987: 10).

Discourse, thus understood, permeates social life. Discourses change as settings change, yet they powerfully determine the ways we behave. According to Lankshear and McLaren, “Discourses are norm-governed practices and involvements around and within which forms of human living are constructed and identities and subjectivities shaped.” In addition, they are “often hidden and implicit” (Lankshear and McLaren 1993b: 11). Discourses determine what is accepted as the ‘right’ way to act, think, speak and feel, and even the ‘right’ values to adopt in different settings (Gee 1990: xv). Whether the discourse is that of religion, academia or the sports bar, there are certain understood or expected ways of speaking, behaving and thinking.

Each Discourse incorporates a usually taken-for-granted and tacit ‘theory’ of what counts as a ‘normal’ person and the ‘right’ ways to think, feel and behave. These theories crucially involve viewpoints on the distribution of ‘social goods’ like status, ‘worth’ and ‘material’ goods in society (who should and who should not have them). ... Language is inextricably bound up with ideology, and cannot be analyzed or understood apart from it (Gee 1990: xx).

‘Belonging’ to a discourse requires an innate sense of what is expected and required so as to behave in the prescribed way. Gee has also made the helpful distinction between primary and secondary discourses. One’s primary discourse is that which served as the initial enculturating discourse in life. It is developed in childhood and is nurtured by the cultural patterns existing within one’s family, language,

community and religion. Identity is originally forged in this context. Secondary discourses are other discourses which are acquired by having access to and practice (apprenticeship) within them (Gee 1990: 151).

Language, and therefore literacy, is seamlessly woven into these discourses so that literacy can never be seen as a neutral or independent skill. In addition, personal identity is formed within one's primary discourse and modified by secondary discourses which have been acquired and learned. The learner's language and identity are challenged by adult education which has its own discourse that learners must understand in order to succeed. Education often comes with a discourse which is embedded within the dominant discourse of society, while learners may come from a minority discourse. Alternatively, adult literacy may adopt a radical or counter discourse which still speaks a different language and uses a different literacy from that of the students themselves. This may result in a clash of identities as the acquisition of certain secondary discourses may even necessitate a degree of opposition to one's primary discourse (Gee 2001).

The dominant discourse of literacy not only imparts skills, it also reinforces the values, beliefs and 'ways of life' represented by those groups associated with it. Discourses on literacy are, therefore, not simply about the acquisition of skills but also a political process concerned with the construction of identities (Crowther et al. 1999: 212).

Discourses are, by their very nature, political. Permeating society as they do, positioning power in relation to knowledge, guiding 'correct' behaviour and speech, and constructing identities are all political acts. As Gee phrases it, "A Discourse is an integration of saying, doing and *valuing*, and all socially-based valuing is political" (Gee 1990: 159). It follows then that adult education, which takes into account the relevant and prevalent discourses, is also political.

The problem is that the dominant or official discourse in any particular setting favours its members or adherents over others. It also requires conformity to a standard, which tends to squelch the diversity and creativity of other discourses (Crowther et al. 1999: 213). This creates major hurdles for adult learners who are already strongly identified with their own primary discourses. Adapting to a new discourse which is different from their own and may run counter to their own is

anything but simple. The discomfort and disorientation that comes from functioning within a dominant discourse which is not one's own may be overcome through acquisition with time. Still, as the dominant discourse exerts power which seeks to define what is appropriate knowledge, it may also frustrate learning and create the impression that what one is learning is someone else's knowledge (Maurial 1999: 64).

The fundamental problem of language is central to an analysis of literacy as discourse. This is particularly relevant for Uganda where the official language of the country and therefore of education, English, is essentially the vernacular language of almost none of the indigenous population. Yet, the use of any particular language carries with it a hidden discourse. Paulo Freire declared that "to continue to use the language of the colonizer as the only medium of instruction is to continue to provide manipulative strategies that support the maintenance of cultural domination" (Freire and Macedo 1987: 117). Language is a social construction which conveys the meanings, history and perspective of its place of origin. It is not static, of course, and can undergo real change over time. Yet in the African context the use of European languages in literacy poses the problem that they inherently convey a powerful political and social discourse which resists competing discourses. The voice, power and knowledge of local discourses can be repressed by the choice of the dominant language for literacy learning and activities (Lankshear 1997: 31).

Providing a voice for indigenous discourses is central to the development of a sense of ownership of knowledge. The "authorship of one's own world" implies the use of one's own language (Freire and Macedo 1987: 151). Yet, the learners themselves may reject attempts to promote literacy in the vernacular, desiring instead the greater status and access afforded by the dominant language, as Yates found in Ghana (Yates 1995: 438). The Curriculum Task Force report to the Government of Uganda again recommended that schooling should take place first in the mother tongue, followed by English and Kiswahili in that order (Uganda Government 1993: 9). However, this rarely occurs as populations become mobile and some teachers and students may not even speak the local vernacular and as parents demand that their children study in English.

This further complicates the search for an effective approach to literacy which engenders and promotes the ownership and development of knowledge at the indigenous level in developing countries. Access to the dominant discourse is potentially a primary motivation for adult learners' involvement in literacy endeavours in the first place. It is only with such access that many participants from other discourses may feel they are empowered (Mayo 1997: 376). As a result, literacy efforts in the vernacular, while promoting the status and value of the vernacular language, may be used only as a stepping stone to literacy in a language of one of the dominant literacies (Barton 1994: 207; Lauglo 2001: 35). Freire himself acknowledged the importance of eventually mastering the dominant language of society in order to empower the people to engage in dialogue with the wider society (Freire and Macedo 1987: 152).

Simple competence in the dominant language is not equivalent to literacy, however, at least not literacy within the concept of discourse. Reading and writing the dominant language is not necessarily accompanied by a broad and critical understanding of the discourse within which the language is used in relation to power and knowledge. Gee identifies two principles which reveal the important and dynamic relationship between literacy and discourse:

The Acquisition Principle

Any Discourse (primary or secondary) is for most people most of the time only mastered through acquisition, not learning. Thus literacy (fluent control or mastery of a secondary Discourse) is a product of acquisition, not learning; that is it requires exposure to models in natural, meaningful and functional settings, and (overt) teaching is not liable to be very successful – it may even initially get in the way. Time spent on learning and not acquisition is time not well spent if the goal is mastery in performance.

The Learning Principle

One cannot critique one Discourse with another one (which is the only way seriously to criticize and thus change a Discourse) unless one has meta-level knowledge about both Discourses. This meta-knowledge is best developed through learning, though often learning applied to a Discourse one has to a certain extent already acquired. Thus 'liberating literacy' ... almost always involves learning, and not just acquisition (Gee 1990: 154).

According to this theory of discourse, both acquisition of and learning in other discourses, primarily dominant discourses, are required before a form of literacy can be developed which is able, with the use of 'meta-level' knowledge, to serve as a critique of other literacies. This usage of discourse is what Gee terms a 'liberating' or 'powerful' literacy (Gee 1990: 153). This type of discourse critique enables an understanding of how these different discourses constitute us as people and situate us within society.

Literacy, then, as understood through discourse theory, becomes transformational in its very nature. In the words of Giroux, "to be literate is to undertake a dialogue with others who speak from different histories, locations, and experiences" (Giroux 1987: 367-368). Yet, discourse pushes the definition even further, for literacy requires meta-level understanding of the use of language, knowledge, and power in multiple discourses. It requires a critical understanding and recognition of one's identity within a primary discourse, the acquisition of other discourses, especially dominant discourses, and the necessary learning of knowledge and power relations within those discourses so as to be able to develop a meta-level critique. It is this process which enables and promotes change. This is 'powerful literacy'.

An essential component of 'powerful literacy' is critique. This is the ability to understand, compare, contrast, analyse and interact with the literacies of multiple discourses in order to deconstruct and reformulate knowledge coherently. A critical approach to literacy is most effectively utilised from within the context of discourse theory. Paradigmatic formulations of literacy have the tendency either to draw the boundary lines rigidly between social groups making honest and fair critique difficult (technical and radical paradigms) or more simply to promote adaptation between literacies rather than transformation (sociocultural paradigm). This is not to say that a critical approach to literacy is impossible within such a paradigmatic framework. However, it is facilitated greatly by the concept of discourse with its emphasis on both acquisition and learning of multiple discourses which promotes meta-level literacy analysis and critique. Stiglitz calls this "social 'democracy-friendly' dialogue." He says that those who participate in this process then develop a sense of "ownership" which will be "transformational" (Stiglitz 2000: 40).

Critical literacy has, interestingly, developed alongside and through the catalyst of the popular literacy paradigm. It is also fascinating to note the influence which Foucault and Gee's concept of discourse has had upon the thinking of writers in the area of critical literacy (Giroux 1987; Lankshear 1997; Lankshear and McLaren 1993a). Discourse theory and the radical paradigm have been blended together to develop a growing interest in critical literacy.

The need to understand an alternative discourse well before valid criticism can be formulated is one of the central contributions which discourse theory has contributed to critical literacy thinkers. Freire stressed the importance of starting with the reality of the learners. He emphasised that the words used must grow out of the existential experience of the learners (Freire and Macedo 1987: 35). Discourse stresses the importance of also developing a meta-knowledge of discourses other than the individual's primary discourse. This dual appropriation of discourse theory and the radical paradigm is seen in the following comments of Lankshear:

The adjective 'critical' and its related terms, 'criticism', 'criticize' and 'critiques', imply judging, comparing, or evaluating on the basis of careful analysis. There are, then, two necessary aspects to any critical orientation. There is the element of evaluation or *judgement*. There is, in addition, the requirement of knowing closely and 'for what it is', that which is being evaluated: the *object* of evaluation or judgement (Lankshear 1997: 43).

Such a critical approach breaks the learner out of the trap of either being a receptacle that is filled with the ideas and skills of others, or being purely reactive. It gives purpose to literacy. "Our aim should be to create not 'functional literacy,' but *critical* literacy, *powerful* literacy, *political* literacy which enables the growth of genuine understanding and control of all of the spheres of social life in which we participate" (Apple 1993: 193). Critical literacy encourages agency, but agency from a position of balanced knowledge rather than from an emotive sense of exclusion or oppression. It reinstates the individual as valuable and of central importance to the future shape of society. Critical discursive literacy situates the individual within and between multiple discourses, providing real opportunity for the critical development and ownership of knowledge.

When adults are not encouraged or enabled to acquire and learn within multiple discourses, critical literacy may be replaced by 'collateral learning'.

Collateral learning represents the process whereby a learner in a non-Western classroom constructs, side by side and with minimal interference and interaction, Western and traditional meanings of a simple concept (Jegade 1999: 130).

This is a dramatic form of code-switching where Western knowledge is stored in long-term memory for use in Western contexts while traditional knowledge is preserved for use in traditional contexts. Critique is replaced by accommodation.

Critical and practical literacy suggest that writing may push the learner beyond simple accommodation. Writing is a powerful tool for enabling adults to develop literacy skills in several ways. It adds the complement of motor skills to visual skills, which increases retention. It also enables learners to form their identity as literate people and to share their strengths (Davies et al. 1994: 165). Freire states that "writing is fundamental from the very beginning of literacy" (Freire and Macedo 1987: 43). Putting one's own words down in written form is an empowering process (Crowther et al. 1999: 217). It is a new way of externalising and concretising thoughts and can serve to add new dimensions to self-expression. Writing is the beginning of agency that extends beyond purely reading words on paper to writing actions in the world.

Writing enables learners to create their own texts. The benefits of this are numerous.⁶⁹ Having written their own texts, learners have a product to keep, which is evidence and a reminder to them of their own skills. This can become a collaborative experience which stimulates natural community instead of separating off the learner as an individual developing individual skills. Yet, perhaps the greatest potential of writing is the development of a critical approach to literacy and the

⁶⁹ The REFLECT project in Uganda has found that by using PRA techniques in the generation of materials, literacy learners stimulate one another in the production of graphics such as matrices, calendars and maps, along with the traditional writing of words. Motivation and retention levels are improved and costs are reduced (Archer and Cottingham 1996: i-ii). However, after controlling for the level of prior schooling, participants in REFLECT circles performed no better than participants in FAL in overall literacy skills (Okech et al. 2001: xx).

ownership of knowledge. When learners become producers of texts instead of receivers, an important shift has taken place. They are no longer simply consumers or receptacles of messages and information. They have begun to create literature and knowledge themselves (Rogers et al. 1999: 77). This helps the literacy learners to clarify the relationship between author and text as they become authors themselves and take the critical first step towards producing and owning knowledge.

Many literacy programmes have tried to fuse a literacy learning process with empowerment. Archer and Cottingham conclude that some have succeeded but “most have failed because they have fallen into believing that either literacy in itself is sufficient (so they have ignored other processes and focused on the product) or they have assumed that empowerment in itself is enough (but have in practice tried to ‘indoctrinate’ people into new ideologies)” (Archer and Cottingham 1996: iii). Literacy and adult education programmes that promote critical thinking, but only within the strictures of a particular ideological framework, may actually serve to restrict honest critique (Street 1984: 186). If the learners themselves understand the ideological stance of the education programme and are given the freedom to question within that stance, critical literacy may be preserved as long as care is taken to guard the freedom of inquiry of the learner. No education is neutral and no educator is honestly able to be neutral in guiding learning. Yet, in the name of promoting critical thinking, care needs to be taken to preserve the right of the learner to criticise the ideology which may drive the particular literacy or education programme itself.

Critical literacy, having primarily grown out of the radical paradigm’s usage of discourse, is often couched in the terminology and ideology of resistance. As long as this is a resistance against the imposition of power and knowledge formations which violate people’s own discourses, violate their truth systems, or violate their humanity and as long as this resistance promotes their own free search for emancipation and justice, then it is potentially able to promote honest critical literacy. The complex balance between one’s personal ideology, one’s personal critical analysis and the desire to promote this same freedom in others is very difficult to maintain (Giroux 1993: 367; Giroux 1987: 6).

Critical literacy, coupled with discourse theory, provides a lens through which adult theological education in Uganda may be effectively critiqued. The concept of acquisition and learning within diverse discourses in order to develop a meta-level ability to understand, evaluate, and work with knowledge provides a clear analytic framework. Such an approach is able to encompass indigenous knowledges and education patterns, as discussed in chapter two, as well as the relevant aspects of the technical, sociocultural and popular paradigmatic approaches to literacy. It propels educational research in the direction of transformational learning and ownership.

DISCURSIVE CRITICAL LITERACY AND OWNERSHIP

When the emphasis of literacy studies shifts towards developing a sense of ownership of knowledge, progress towards development, empowerment and agency can all potentially be embraced simultaneously. When literacy encourages knowledge to be critiqued, disowned or reformulated so that it can be owned by the individual as a member of community, it carries with it a powerful impetus to transform, not just interpret (Brookfield 2001: 11), the word and the world. An understanding of literacy as discourse validates and makes space for the adult Ugandan's cultural and oral learning patterns, providing a theoretical and practical process through which access to interdiscursive meaning is possible. A critical approach to literacy, applied discursively, enables ownership of knowledge. Grounding literacy in meta-level discourse positions it to become a transformative agent. Meta-level discourse critique also propels new knowledge formation and ownership as it crosses borders between primary, secondary and dominant discourses.

This form of critical literacy emerges out of the tension between literacy as social practice and literacy as text. Prevailing over both of these dimensions is the dominant discourse as 'broker' for a particular formulation of power and knowledge. Social practice limits particular literacies within the domain of the dominant literacy. In addition, all literacies are historically and socially constructed and therefore carry with them the "strengths and limitations of those places and borders we inherit and which frame our discourses and social relations" (Giroux 1993: 368). Literacies also construct relationships between people. In the words of Giroux, "They also read the

world in spaces and social relationships constructed between themselves and others which demand actions based on judgements and choices about how one is to act in the face of ideologies, values and experiences that constitute ‘otherness’” (Giroux 1993: 368). Literacy is not a set of neutral skills, but is comprised of socially defined and politically powerful practices. Critical literacy, then, is a process of redrawing those borders, spaces and social relationships which define local literacies.

The borders imposed upon critical literacy by schooling and other educational endeavours must be recognised and overcome if ownership is to be realised. Literacy should not be equated to schooling, although schooling should and often does promote literacy. “In the most general sense, schooling is about the regulation of time, space, textuality, experience, knowledge and power amidst conflicting interests and histories that simply cannot be pinned down in simple theories of reproduction and resistance” (Giroux 1987: 14). Whereas schooling serves to regulate and often to standardise knowledge, critical literacy serves to evaluate and loosen the regulations which surround knowledge. It is active learning which reappropriates and adapts general knowledge for development.

Schooling, or formal adult academic programmes, can present real problems for non-mainstream learners. Since schooling usually operates within the strictures of the dominant discourse, those who do not have the ‘cultural capital’ (Bourdieu 1997) necessary to operate within that discourse are disadvantaged. In the African context, the largest proportion of parents and communities do not have “a working knowledge of how modern education functions” and what to expect from it (Namuddu 2002: 1). Schools are often quite poor at facilitating acquisition of the academic discourse, focusing instead on learning within that discourse (Gee 1990: 158). This means that non-mainstream learners often gain just enough to mark themselves as ‘outsiders’ while never managing to acquire the discourse sufficiently to develop meta-level critical skills.

This problem is magnified for adult learners in Uganda. The education programmes within which they find themselves may be a strange mix of the dominant discourses derived from former colonial powers, current global powers and the dominant discourse within the nation of Uganda itself. When adults with minimal exposure to

formal schooling enter this setting, they lack the 'cultural capital' with which to decipher the messages they receive. In addition, they are normally studying in a language other than their own. With little opportunity to acquire an understanding of these other discourses, they are quickly disadvantaged as learners regardless of their own potential and competence.

Critical literacy endeavours to remedy this by expanding borders and creating new spaces in which discursive meta-level cognitive processes are enabled and liberated. A critical approach to literacy becomes an expansive project. It poses a counterpoint to the dominant discourse. It may focus on "disjuncture, rupture, and contradiction" (McLaren and Lankshear 1993: 381) in the attempt to "offset the conventions of teleological closure that operate as a centralizing force in the construction of meaning systems" (Lankshear and McLaren 1993b: 48). Alternatively, it may call for a process which filters out the best of opposing literacies to create something better. "Learning that there are many literacies involves enabling people to appropriate the dominant literacy critically – and in a way which valorises the local culture without discarding what is useful in the dominant one" (Crowther et al. 1999: 216). In its search for meaning, it may even be confirmational, recognising truth and values which cross the borders of discourses in time and space.

It is this search for discursive critical meaning which necessitates a discussion of hermeneutics. When literacy is infused into orality and when the learner must operate in both orally-focused and literacy-based discourses, discerning meaning within written texts becomes a critically discursive task. Texts are social constructs framed within the discourses of their authors. Texts are not simply 'delivery systems' of 'facts'. Rather, they are the result of "political, economic, and cultural activities, battles, and compromises" (Apple 1993: 195). Their interpretation, then, requires an understanding of their social and discursive contexts. This problem of interpretation is accentuated in the post-modern climate today. As Gee points out, "There is, however, no easy way out: if all interpretations ('re-sayings') count, then none does, as the text then says everything and therefore nothing" (Gee 1990: 36). It takes on particularly interesting dimensions in the context of theological education where the central text, the Bible, is understood to be sacred and 'true'.

Hermeneutics provides parameters within which effective interpretation may take place. Originally the domain of theologians in their study of the scriptures, during the nineteenth century hermeneutics was broadened and incorporated into textual interpretation in general (Eagleton 1983: 66). The extension of hermeneutic rigour to the interpretation of general texts has given rise to a persistent debate about meaning in texts. This debate touches the core of meta-cognitive and meta-level communication theory, the metaphysics of meaning, and the possibility of knowledge. Critical literacy, coupled with hermeneutic principles, provides the potential for critical and innovative work with texts, including the Bible, while still maintaining textual integrity.

THE SEARCH FOR MEANING

Christian theology provides both oral and literacy-based avenues, as noted in chapter two, through which theological knowledge may be pursued. However, this pursuit, in the context of religious faith, is not simply an individual enterprise. Theological truth is the objective of a faith community and must be owned both individually and corporately within the discourse of this community and of the individual. This requires that meaning, in both oral and written communication, is possible to discern and access. It necessitates a commonly accepted process by which meaning in text can be ascertained. The dynamic interplay between orality and literacy in Uganda requires that the practical search for meaning implements and values both oral and written hermeneutic processes. This is particularly urgent in conservative Christianity as the Bible is considered to be the ground and repository of Christian theology while Jesus, who is the living Word, and the Holy Spirit provide the oral dimension which confirms the written word. As the written word invades the traditional orality-based religious structure in Uganda, the search for meaning in text becomes both essential and potentially problematic.

The importance of the written word in general, as promoted by the EFA campaign world-wide and by UPE and FAL in Uganda, is founded upon the assumption that writing conveys meaning and promotes the transmission and production of knowledge. Literacy may be seen as beneficial economically, socially, for personal growth or for national development. This assumption, whether defended historically,

statistically or theoretically, is based upon certain presuppositions and premises which are often unconscious, yet they fundamentally shape the use of literacy to produce or organise knowledge. It is to these 'first things', these presuppositions, that this chapter now turns. It will first address the controversial issue of whether the locus of meaning resides in the author, the text or the reader. Secondly, it will briefly consider the philosophical problem of accrediting meaning to words, both spoken and written. Finally, the concept of text as a means of communicative action and of interpretation as necessarily encompassing authorial intent, textual analysis and 'reader response' will be presented. If Christian theological knowledge is to be validated in Ugandan theological education, its basis in the written text must be shown to convey meaning even as oral communication is perceived to communicate meaning. It is proposed that such an understanding of meaning in written texts provides literacy studies with validity.

The valuing of textual meaning and the ability to ascertain that meaning are essential if Christian theological knowledge is to transform lives and be owned as knowledge in Uganda. Oral traditions and indigenous education systems which value the process of verbal interaction to establish clear meaning are confronted in Christian theology by the premise that truth and knowledge are contained in a sacred text, the Bible. Yet this text may appear to resist the usual forms of verbal interaction which establish meaning. Verbal meaning needs to be validated in written texts if it is to be fully owned in the vibrant interaction between orality and literacy in Uganda.

LOCUS OF TEXTUAL MEANING

The history of modern literary theory could be periodized quite simply into three stages. Romanticism and the nineteenth century were characterised by a preoccupation with the author. This was followed by an almost exclusive concern with the text (textual criticism). Subsequently, there has been a marked shift toward focusing upon the reader (Eagleton 1983: 74; Vanhoozer 1998: 25). All three of these emphases have represented critical and philosophical shifts in perspective concerning the pursuit of meaning in texts.

It seems natural to expect that text carries, or should carry, the intent and meaning of its author. Authors write because they desire to convey particular thoughts, ideas, directions or information to others.⁷⁰ The principle of authorial intent was central to Christian Reformation scholars, who emphasised the importance of pursuing the author's (human or divine) intention. Their position is summarised by Vanhoozer: "Language and literature express thought; grammar gives us access to psychology" (Vanhoozer 1998: 25).

Yet the question is naturally asked, "Can thoughts be put on paper?" Thoughts and intentions are elusive cognitive elements. Is it possible for the intent and purposes of the author to be accurately transmitted through text? Can text facilitate meta-cognitive communication or intersubjectivity, as defined in chapter two? These questions engender concerns that by over-emphasising authorial intent, interpreters can be misled not so much by the text as by their perception of the author's purpose.

Historically, these questions led to a new hermeneutic priority, which focused on the text itself. The grammatical structure and textual context were deemed to be a more reliable guide to interpreting meaning in text than the reader's own projection of the author's intent. This has been termed the New Criticism of the mid-twentieth century. It has been argued that text has permanence which continues long after the author is absent. The formal grammatical codes which make text intelligible change only slowly over time. Their change is normally traceable and can be documented historically, thereby giving grammatical analysis a positivistic, scientific authority. Although complex in its textual analysis, the parameters of this approach are clear, "the text, the whole text, and nothing but the text" (Vanhoozer 1998: 26).

The move from an emphasis upon the text to an emphasis upon the reader was gradual but inevitable. Text is distanced from the author. Whereas an author may change his or her approach or ideas, text remains unchanged. The author may not be

⁷⁰ The author is normally acknowledged to have a sense of ownership over his or her text. This may be understood to be the ownership of the labour involved in writing the text and the benefits that derive from it (e.g. royalties) or the ownership of the ideas themselves which the author conveys (e.g. copyright) (Vanhoozer 1998: 46).

present or even alive, but the text remains as it was first written. This distancing from the author is accompanied by an increased proximity to the reader. Text moves, as it were, from the pen of the writer to the eye of the reader. The importance of the text and its closeness to the reader led Heidegger to view interpretation not so much as something we do, but as something we allow to happen. Passively opening ourselves to the mysterious essence of the text allows the text to interrogate us (Eagleton 1983: 64).

Before long, the reader had replaced both the text and the author as the locus for the development of textual meaning. The reader activates meaning in the presence of text (Boff 1991). Within this 'reception theory', the reader's role in literacy, interpretation and the development of knowledge became central.

The text is really no more than a series of 'cues' to the reader, invitations to construct a piece of language into meaning. In the terminology of reception theory, the reader 'concretizes' the literary work, which is in itself no more than a chain of organized black marks on a page. Without this continuous active participation on the reader's part, there would be no literary work at all (Eagleton 1983: 76).

The emphasis on reader response was, in part, a reaction to the positivism of textual criticism (Vanhoozer 1998: 27). The structuralist idea that the text was an object to be studied and was independent of both author and reader caused meaning to become almost as detached as the text. The search for meaning in a post-structuralist world turned naturally to the readers themselves who, in interacting with the text, activated a sense of its meaning.

However, this reveals a deeper problem, the problem of the epistemology of meaning itself. Shifting the locus of meaning cannot answer the question of whether or not there is actually meaning in the text. Instead, it takes for granted that meaning exists and simply shifts its position. The reader had usurped the text, which had usurped the author as the generator of meaning.

THE PROBLEM OF MEANING

The deeper problem of the existence of meaning in writing had been simply accepted as a given throughout most of the above history. However, the inability of critics to

locate meaning in literature led to the pursuit of meaning itself and its origins. Could it be that meaning either is not present or that it is simply too ambiguous for interpreters to be able to access reliably? Do words, written or spoken, convey meaning?

The groundwork for this debate was laid in many ways by the Yale professor, E.D. Hirsch. He proposed that “meaning is an affair of consciousness not of words” (Hirsch 1967: 4). Hirsch explained that almost any sequence of words could legitimately represent more than one meaning. Words in sequence mean little until somebody means something by them (Hirsch 1967: 4). They are instilled with meaning, either by the speaker/author or by the listener/reader. For Hirsch, then, meaning is what the author meant by the sign sequence used as represented by the written signs in the text. The author instils words with particular meaning. Significance, on the other hand, refers to the relationship between the meaning and a person, situation or idea. Authorial meaning in text does not change for Hirsch, but its significance for the interpreter may vary (Hirsch 1967: 8). His understanding of meaning and its relationship to author and reader are summarised in the following statement.

...meaning is an affair of consciousness and not of physical signs or things. Consciousness is, in turn, an affair of persons, and in textual interpretation the persons involved are an author and a reader. The meanings that are actualized by the reader are either shared with the author or belong to the reader alone (Hirsch 1967: 23).

Hirsch’s writing sparked off a wave of responses, many of which extended his explanation of the origin of meaning.

Instead of meaning originating from consciousness alone, meaning in text was seen not as simply expressed and reflected in language, but as being *produced* by language (Eagleton 1983: 60). Language, as the mode of communicating meaning, was seen not as static but as dynamic. Language, rather than consciousness, became the operative factor. Encapsulated in the form of text, it could modify or produce meaning. This view allows for the potential development of meaning independent of the author and possibly of the reader as well. However, when meaning becomes simply a product of language it has begun the march down an ever increasingly

slippery slope of meaninglessness. When spoken or written words cease to be meaning-bearers, the study of scripture loses its purpose in theological education.

Written language is dependent upon a series of signs and symbols (letters, punctuation marks and diacritics), organised on paper in coded fashion. Crediting these signs as signifiers of meaning allows writing to carry content. But policing the meaning of signifiers is difficult. Once they are on paper as objects, detached from the author and even from the reader, they can be manipulated so that they are no longer producers of knowledge in Eagleton's sense, but become purely empty signs, open to free interpretation of any sort. Jacques Derrida's deconstruction does precisely this to text.

There is not a single signified that escapes, even if recaptured, the play of signifying references that constitute language. The advent of writing is the advent of this play: today such a play is coming into its own, effacing the limit starting from which one had thought to regulate the circulation of signs, drawing along with it all the reassuring signifieds, reducing all the strongholds, all the out-of-bounds shelters that watched over the field of language. This, strictly speaking, amounts to destroying the concept of 'sign' and its entire logic (Derrida 1976: 7).

Derrida deconstructs written language with its signs and signifiers until the black marks on a white background become voids, awaiting meaning. This meaning can be instilled by any number of interpreters in any number of ways. Yet these meanings, in turn, may be deconstructed by others, creating limitless interpretations.

Interestingly, Derrida later states, "The age of the sign is essentially theological" (Derrida 1976: 14). The sign as a signifier of meaning indicates structure, closure and the possibility, even probability of truth. This is why Derrida calls it theological in nature. When signs are deconstructed they expand the possibility of meanings which they may be construed to carry. Closure and restriction are evaded, opening the horizons to a post-modern plethora of meanings. However, these meanings are all similarly empty. They are temporary and potentially arbitrary, waiting, in turn, to be deconstructed. Meaning then becomes meaningless. This is why Derrida himself states that "the enterprise of deconstruction always in a certain way falls prey to its own work" (Derrida 1976: 24).

This kind of philosophical deconstruction of textual meaning is problematic because it distances text from the context which produces it, people and their habit of communication. Such distancing of text from both its origin and its audience fundamentally undermines the ability to use texts effectively. This is particularly true in orally-focused cultures such as those found in Uganda. The designifying of 'signifiers' is "simple fantasy bred in the minds of those who have spent too long in the classroom" (Eagleton 1983: 87). Text does not appear on its own, the result of some impersonal force or accident. It is formed by people who operate within accepted guidelines for communication within a community. The value accredited to orality in Uganda may actually facilitate and promote the recognition of meaning in written texts, which are essentially words with verbal meanings that are preserved in written form. Linguistic 'codes', derived from verbal communication between persons, enable words to do work. Words, and by inference their 'signifiers', convey meaning within these societal frameworks. If they did not, communication would be valueless, whether spoken or written.

Speech and written text require the understanding that what is voiced represents thought and meaning. Without this foundational understanding, the whole human enterprise of the transmission of knowledge, both orally and through literacy, becomes nullified.

The problem of textual interpretation lies in the text's detachment from the author. This sense of distance may be compounded in Uganda where verbal confirmation of meaning is a natural and expected part of traditional learning processes. In common speech between individuals, interpretation of the meanings of words can be immediately tested by questioning the speaker. There are also other variables which help to determine the meaning of speech such as facial expression, intonation of the voice, physical gestures and the cultural context within which language itself is formed and exists. Written texts appear, at first, to be devoid of such helpful cues. Yet, texts are not purely black specks on paper. Context is developed within text which, in the hands of a skilful author, serves to delineate and clarify meaning. Grammatical and syntactical rules also limit the number of meanings that can be attributed to a single text (Mickelsen 1963; Ramm 1970). 'Signifiers' do not stand in

isolation. As Saint Augustine said, “He is in bondage to a sign who uses, or pays homage to, any significant object without knowing what it signifies” (Augustine 1956: 560).

RESTORING VALIDITY TO LITERACY STUDIES

The validity of literacy studies as a whole depends upon an adequate formulation of the philosophical basis for meaning in the text and its interpretation by readers of the text. Just as words spoken without any sense of purpose or meaning become a cacophony of senseless noise, so written text without meaning becomes a string of purposeless symbols that confuse rather than convey knowledge. Without verbal meaning, literacy loses its potential for transmitting and generating the further production of knowledge.

Language is primarily based in oral communication. One identifying characteristic of human beings is their ability to communicate extensively with one another. This communication is based upon ‘codes’ which are societally or culturally defined and mutually recognised by speaker and listener(s). Speech is effective precisely because it is able to convey intention and purpose from speaker to listener with the appropriate understanding and interpretation actualised by the listener. Communication certainly can and does break down, but it is termed as a ‘break down’ precisely because it has not accomplished, in that instance, the transmission of meaning that was intended and expected.

The post-modern, post-structural move toward complete freedom in interpretation is not so much liberating as self-defeating. It results in the voiding of all meaning. Rather than a hermeneutic of suspicion, it becomes a “suspicion of hermeneutics” (Vanhoozer 1998: 31). When the ability to understand and interpret communication through language is under suspicion, one’s view of what it means to be human is also thrown into doubt.

Communication does not require either author or reader to be the sole providers of meaning. Meaning is a matter of “communicative action: both the ‘doing’ and the resultant ‘deed’”:

This 'action' model of meaning provides the best account both of the possibility of stable meaning and of the transformative capacity of texts. It also entails a view of interpretation that gives primacy to the author as communicative agent. To inquire into what the text means is to ask what the author has done in, with, and through the text. *The goal of understanding is to grasp what has been done, together with its effects; the possibility of attaining such understanding is the presupposition of communicative action* (Vanhoozer 1998: 218).

This concept accepts that the human experience confirms that communication does take place. Communicative speech requires not only a speaker (or author) but also an audience. This dual dynamic in communication is what distinguishes it from either meditation or monologue. It is the basis for communicative confirmation of knowledge and understanding in the orality-based learning patterns developed within indigenous education systems in Uganda.

The reader, as interpreter, plays a necessary and critical role in the communicative process of texts. Readers are not blank sheets upon which the text can inscribe its meaning. Their own historical context and discourse intersect with their reading of the text (Ela 1991: 257) because reflection and articulation never happen in a cultural vacuum (Mugambi 1995: 19-20). They bring to the text their own presuppositions as well as their previous "social and literary entanglements." This 'reader response' must be recognised by the interpreters themselves in the process of hermeneutics (Eagleton 1983: 89). Yet, readers are not sovereign, instilling meaning into empty texts. They must acknowledge the authorial intent and the original discursive contexts as well as their own interpretive role in text.

Validity of interpretation is difficult to defend because of natural divergence between the authorial intent and the 'response' of the interpreter. The distance between author and reader creates the appearance of an actual divide. Olson calls this the "given-interpretation distinction."

It was the hypothesis that something was given, invariant, and autonomous about a text and that that givenness could be contrasted with the interpretations of that text which were subjective, fallible, and the product of the imagination. That distinction I say was invited by literacy because writing, in fact, split the comprehension process into two parts, that preserved by text, the given, and that provided by the reader, the interpretation (Olson 1991: 160).

However, it might be suggested that the text cannot be defined purely as a 'given' in the sense of 'static'. Texts are created by authors who expect to communicate through the action of writing, just as speakers expect to communicate through the spoken word. Restricted by the 'coding' of society, text is able to transmit authorial intent. At the same time, text is a 'given' in that it is fixed and objectified. Yet, its use requires it to be manipulated, decoded and understood by readers. The text's form as a 'given' can be seen to serve the necessary function of facilitating the transmission of meaning while also restricting its interpretation within societally prescribed limits.

Texts, then, may be understood as the agents of communicative action. Their dependence upon language, which is 'coded' by society in order to enable communication, results in necessary restrictions being placed upon their interpretation. These restrictions are not detrimental to the formation of knowledge, rather they are essential for its transmission and construction. They are the very aspects of literacy that make it such a powerful tool of knowledge. This has particular importance for theological education since Christian theology credits God as being the primary author of the scriptures, which are contained in book form, the Bible.

The perception of text as 'book' portrays writing as communicative action with restricted meaning and closure, frustrating deconstructionists.

The idea of the book, which always refers to a natural totality, is profoundly alien to the sense of writing. It is the encyclopedic protection of theology and of logocentrism against the disruption of writing, against its aphoristic energy, and ... against difference in general (Derrida 1976: 18).

Derrida is correct to perceive closure as theological. It does convey the idea of limits or parameters. However, the removal of these from life results in the deconstruction of life and meaning itself. Deconstruction turns in on itself because it simply cannot account for the reality of life or language as understood in society. Theological education is uniquely situated to use text in literacy effectively because it *is* theological, just as both the elemental concept of 'signifier' and the comprehensive concept of 'book' are theological.

A balanced approach to hermeneutics must recognise the mutual importance of authorial intent, textual analysis and the reader's response. Priority in the interpretation of meaning should respect the primacy of the author as originator of text, and then the text as the mediator of authorial intent, while recognising the important effect which the reader also brings to the hermeneutic equation. The similarity to oral interpretive skills is striking. The speaker voices words that are selected purposively to convey particular meaning. The listener decodes those words by taking into account both the position and culture of the speaker and his or her own culturally accepted understanding of those words. Such an approach to the discernment of meaning enables the intersubjectivity of oral communication to be mirrored by interdiscursivity in the interpretation of written texts. Oral communicative skills, then, may conceptually facilitate textual interpretation by those accustomed to oral interaction.

Hermeneutics provides the parameters within which both oral and written textual interpretation are made possible. It maintains the integrity and validity of the original text while simultaneously facilitating the individual or communal manipulation of knowledge in appropriate and creative terms. It emphasises the commonalities between the oral and written contexts, demystifying textual interpretation for those groomed in the skill of oral interpretation. The dynamic interplay between orality and literacy in Uganda only accentuates the necessity of working with knowledge within hermeneutic parameters which protect the boundaries of meaning while promoting the dynamic interface between person (or community) and text.

Asian, Latin American and black hermeneuts in their future exegetical enterprise will need to enable the oral experience of the world and critical analysis of its written form to illuminate each other in a reciprocal solidarity (Sugirtharaja 1991: 440).

Hermeneutics, particularly as applied to sacred texts, pushes the borders of commonly accepted approaches to literacy. It resists simple instrumentalism, while recognising the need for the usefulness of theological knowledge. It accepts the importance of the sociocultural aspects of literacy, while expecting sacred texts to stretch learners beyond their sociocultural heritage. Theological hermeneutics

crosses and stretches the borders of literacy paradigms in the pursuit of transformative meaning. Such an approach incorporates indigenous education styles and the reality of multiple discourses in an understanding of education that promotes and enables meaning to be discerned, understood, used and owned as knowledge.

CONCLUSION

Discourse theory provides a bridge spanning the gap between literacy-based formal education and orality-based indigenous education. It also recognises the formative importance of the individual's approach to learning as developed within the primary linguistic and cultural setting of life. Through the principles of acquisition and learning, movement from one's primary discourse into secondary or multiple discourses becomes possible. The coupling of critical literacy theory with discourse theory, then, provides the empowering tool of critique, applied at the meta-cognitive level, to facilitate the ownership of knowledge. In addition, a consistent hermeneutic, which spans both orality and literacy-based systems of learning, provides reliability and validity. Such an approach to understanding the dynamics of the ownership of knowledge draws together all of the essential aspects of the historical establishment of literacy-based formal education in Uganda, the potentially conflicting cultural forces and political economy which shape current adult education and the dynamic interface between orality and literacy in learning and the pursuit of meaning.

The multiplicity of positions or outcomes available within discursive critical literacy is evidence of the broad potential for knowledge formation and ownership that it provides. Instead of operating out of an ideological paradigm, it adopts a perspective which sees literacy as embedded within the discourses that shape communal life. In this sense, critical literacy falls outside of the technical paradigm, yet it is potentially able to accomplish the same objectives even more effectively due to the sense of ownership of the knowledge acquired. The skills learned are not learned for someone else or for the economy, but for the individual as a constituent member of diverse communities. This form of critical literacy draws heavily from the fundamental concepts developed within the sociocultural literacy paradigm yet dramatically departs from it by encouraging meta-level discourse analysis instead of

adaptation between discourses or literacies. Finally, the radical paradigm's emphasis on empowerment and agency greatly influences critical literacy. However, discursive critical literacy diverges from the radical paradigm by being less ideologically driven, promoting instead the acquisition and learning of multiple discourses in order to develop a meta-knowledge critique. It must be able to recognise the voice of the author and the author's community as discourse in texts, while maintaining cognisance of the community discourse(s) which represents the reader's world.

This form of 'powerful literacy' is not only able to deconstruct knowledge as conveyed within other discourses, but it should also be able to reconstruct knowledge at the meta-level. It provides for honestly reflecting one's primary discourse in the light of and with the benefit of other discourses and their potential contributions to knowledge formation. It is suggested that these critical and creative processes would be significant contributions to Ugandan theological education and would contribute to the ownership and production of knowledge.

Indeed, the application of discursive critical literacy to the theological education of adults with minimal formal schooling in Uganda raises several important issues and questions. These relate to learning mechanisms which facilitate the ownership of knowledge in Uganda. An exploration of the dynamic interface between orality and literacy in Ugandan adult education requires an examination of the value and space provided for learners to use linguistic, oral and communal aspects of their primary discourse in the academic setting. The approach of adults' primary discourses to the written word must be discerned. Learners' exposure to the dominant discourses which pertain to theological study needs to be observed in order to determine if they have the opportunity to develop a meta-level knowledge which will enable critical theological literacy. The development and use of hermeneutic principles to enable learners to dynamically pursue meaning and knowledge requires analysis. These issues, which grow out of critical literacy, provide the catalyst for both the research methodology and the research questions that are developed in the following chapter.

Research needs to examine how knowledge is owned in theological education in Uganda. It must identify the salient characteristics of the primary discourse from

which adult learners are drawn, and the relative roles of orality and literacy in both informal and formal adult learning. At the same time, the discourse which adult theological education in Uganda has adopted needs to be clearly established. The voices of the various participants in adult theological education need to be heard concerning current factors that either stimulate or stifle the ownership of knowledge.

Chapter Four

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Church growth in Africa and in Uganda specifically poses an interesting and important problem for theological education. Following Uganda's independence in 1962, as previously noted in the historical perspective, the Ugandan Church began to recognise its own situated character and place within Christendom. This sense of distinctiveness in character has not been translated as easily into the arena of theological education. Instead, theological training continues to exemplify a strongly Euro-centric bias, creating a "theological debt crisis" (Niringiye 1996: 116). The dominant language of instruction is English, with relatively little attention paid to the impact of language upon learning and agency. The critically important interface between literacy and orality for Ugandans as they live simultaneously in both literate and oral worlds is ignored in the rush to prepare new church leaders through standard Western methods of education, primarily appropriating the methods of formal schooling. Knowledge transfer appears to dominate, while the ownership of knowledge and its manipulation is devalued.

There is an apparent rupture in the transmission of the ownership of knowledge to the future leaders of the church in Uganda. Although they may have completed courses of theological study, there is an apparent breakdown between education and practice or between the transfer of knowledge and its use. The formal philosophy and organisation of the education system, as a whole, remains predominantly foreign (Namuddu 1991: 41). The call of key African theologians for genuine theologising to take place within Africa and by Africans (Appiah-Kubi and Torres 1979)⁷¹ often seems to echo throughout the halls of theological training institutions without response.

⁷¹ For further comments, see Ela (1986); Martey (1993); Mbiti (1969); Mugambi (1989); Nthamburi (1991); Pan African Conference of Third World Theologians (1979).

Given this background, this research seeks to understand how knowledge is owned by adult learners in theological education in Uganda. It examines the interface between literacy and orality in light of discursive critical literacy theory in an attempt to unravel the hermeneutic which characterises the search for meaning and knowledge. It seeks to expose critical elements of adult theological education that either frustrate or facilitate ownership through an examination of the linguistic and discursive orientation of curricula and pedagogical practice.

The target of this study is the theological education of adult Ugandans who have had limited exposure to formal education. Primary attention is given to adult learners who have not studied beyond primary seven (or a maximum of secondary four) in the national schooling curriculum and to those who are doing theological studies at the equivalent of either the primary level or 'O' level.

The following questions frame the research conducted in this study.

- 1) Do Ugandan teachers and/or students perceive of themselves as owning theological knowledge? How is ownership, Ugandan or Western, evidenced in practice? How can Ugandans be prepared and enabled through theological education to develop and formulate theological knowledge themselves?
- 2) What is the approach of the students' primary discourses to the written word? Is the written word authoritative? Can it be questioned? Is it open for creative manipulation? What hermeneutic characterises their interaction with text?
- 3) What are the discourse practices which characterise theological education in Uganda? In what ways have the students been socialised into those discourse practices? Are they sufficiently exposed to the dominant discourses which pertain to theological study so that they can develop a meta-level knowledge which will enable critical theological literacy?
- 4) Is the issue of orality and literacy recognised in theological education systems in Uganda? What is being done in theological education to capitalise upon the dynamic tension between oral and written theology, instead of demanding the demise of the one in favour of the other?

- 5) How much does the choice of English influence the ability of learners to think discursively and critically? Does the use of English facilitate or frustrate the authentic generation and development of knowledge?
- 6) Is the curriculum perceived as primarily Western or Ugandan by students? How is it perceived by teachers?
- 7) In what way does donor financing and involvement in theological education influence the development of ownership?
- 8) Are there principles or methods from Ugandan indigenous education that might assist in developing greater Ugandan authenticity and ownership in the curriculum?

The themes addressed in the pursuit of these questions are very pertinent for the healthy development of education in Uganda. Katherine Namuddu, writing from the Ugandan perspective, emphasises that “research information related to and explaining the influence on achievement of factors such as: the mastery of the medium of instruction; the effect of the use of a metropolitan language in instruction and in public examinations; the pedagogy of literacy; the basic content of the core curriculum” and how “local knowledge and decision-making structures” can be incorporated into new innovative strategies for educational development should be research priorities in sub-Saharan Africa (Namuddu 1991: 65). The above research questions address these important priorities by examining the fundamental issue of knowledge ownership.

This chapter develops a qualitative multi-dimensional methodological approach to research that recognises the challenges facing Northern-based research in the South. The blending of grounded theory and critical social research makes provision for emergent theory through the voice of the stakeholders while maintaining a critical theoretical perspective. This enables continuity and consistency between theory and research by enabling the voice of participants in adult theological education in Uganda to give substantive shape to the question of ownership, while providing a critical and discursive framework for the analysis of curricular, pedagogical and linguistic elements that expose the educational approach to the interface between orality and literacy.

NORTHERN-BASED RESEARCH IN THE SOUTH

Northern-based educational research in the developing world has been predisposed to promote foreign concepts and categories in other countries and cultures in an attempt to suggest solutions to apparent problems. As Katherine Namuddu states:

Foreign-inspired research seeks to perpetuate the predominance of a foreign philosophy and organizational patterns by insisting that what countries in Sub-Saharan Africa lack in order to raise the quality of education are: adequate instructional resources and facilities; adequately trained and motivated teachers who are well-remunerated and who can use data management systems to extract the information they need; sufficiently trained planners and managers; and well-designed assessment systems, all of which should be obtained by importing existing models of educational development practiced in the North (Namuddu 1991: 45).

Much foreign-inspired research has been preoccupied with the application of ‘cures’ to the symptoms or manifestations of problems without actually ascertaining the nature of the disease itself (Namuddu 1991: 41). It is “unhelpful help” as it seeks to provide answers without enabling the stakeholders to determine the problem and search for their own solutions (Ellerman 2002: 2). This study is an attempt to reverse that process in two ways. First, it is an attempt to enable the voice of Ugandans who are involved in theological education. Secondly, it is an attempt to understand those elements that either facilitate or frustrate the ownership of knowledge. The blending of these two objectives will enable the insights of Ugandan participants, the lessons from indigenous education patterns and the practical attempts by Ugandans to make knowledge their own, to inform the research conclusions. As such, it addresses the primary objective of education, knowledge, not as content or facts but as that which may be possessed and the process which makes possession a reality.

Another natural tendency of Northern-based research, as it seeks to discover, describe and/or expand knowledge, is to prioritise its own knowledge and agenda. This raises questions about its role in helping to build a knowledge sharing culture in the South (King 2001: 33). Such research seeks to learn about others in order to incorporate new information into what has been termed ‘world-ordering knowledge’. Contrasted with this is the concept of situated knowledge (Nelson and Wright 1995: 45-47). This recognises the value of indigenous knowledge, which is specific to a

culture or people and to their circumstances. The challenge is to enable the possessors of situated knowledge to act upon new knowledge, framing, formulating and re-conceptualising it so that the resultant knowledge is owned by them, dynamically blending both the situated and the new.

The accepted paradigm for academic research and writing is a product of Western or Northern thought. Paradigms are cognitive road maps. They reflect “the basic belief system or worldview that guides the investigator, not only in choices of method but in ontologically and epistemologically fundamental ways” (Guba and Lincoln 1994: 105). The Northern research paradigm is steeped in rationalism and the ‘scientific’ model. The past three decades have seen a fracturing of this system with challenges from post-modernism and feminism. Yet the fractures have not penetrated to the core, having instead fragmented the surface and brought new changes to the methodologies which are simply an outgrowth of this same Northern academic paradigm.

The common response to this dominant approach has been to seek to be culturally sensitive or relevant while remaining within the overall paradigm. However, this may quickly become self-contradictory as Euro-centric logic is applied to diverse cultural populations (Stanfield II 1994b: 182). The relevance of Africanists often consists of demonstrating that their knowledge is relevant and that it has already been successfully incorporated in the traditional academic disciplines (Zeleza 1997: 497). There is a sense in which those who make the rules, the Western academy, determine whose voice is to be heard, since those who design the tools control the power (Smith 1999: 29, 38).

The Northern researcher cannot stand completely outside of the paradigm within which he functions as a member of an Euro-centric society. To pretend to do so would be disingenuous. But by recognising the researcher’s location within that paradigm, he is able to critically reflect upon its possible influence upon him as he works in the South and to serve as an ‘informed ally’ of those in the South (Semali and Kincheloe 1999: 18). At the same time, he must avoid “essentialism and its accompanying romanticization of the indigene” (Semali and Kincheloe 1999: 20). Positively, he may provide access for the Ugandan voice to be heard and to

contribute to theory and knowledge. The questions which are asked, the critical analysis performed and the writing style used must all be employed after careful consideration of voice and knowledge representation.

In order for the research to be effective and bring about genuine change it must employ a consultative approach that fosters community ownership (Namuddu 1991: 63; Stanfield II 1994a: 174-175). Additionally, if research is to influence decision-making and policy-making, stakeholders must have a voice in determining its relevance to their own needs, the questions to be asked and its future potential use (Namuddu 1991: 51; Stanfield II 1994a: 174). As noted in the introduction, BUU leaders encouraged the researcher to pursue this research in order to help them to evaluate their current education programmes for church leaders. A consultative approach was also facilitated by maintaining an open dialogue with the gatekeepers in the community⁷² in order to determine together the best way to approach the research and to frame the key questions (Smith 1999: 173). The researcher's many years spent working with this community and his commitment to continue this relationship with them following the research, was essential for the establishment of this co-operative approach to research.

APPROACH TO RESEARCH

This study is qualitative in nature as it endeavours to discover attitudes and practices which reveal how theological knowledge is or may be owned by adult Ugandan learners. This is consistent with the theoretical framework developed in the previous chapters which values the voice and knowledge of adult learners and educators in defining educational needs, priorities and pedagogy. It also provides the opportunity for observation of oral and literacy hermeneutic practices as displayed in traditional and academic contexts.

The centrality of people is necessary in all aspects of the research as it attempts to describe the setting and context in which literacy and orality interface within

⁷² This refers to Anglican, Baptist and Catholic Church leaders concerned with theological education in Uganda.

theological education. Qualitative research is particularly appropriate as it “places individual actors at its centre,” and focuses upon “context, meaning, culture, history and biography” (Hitchcock and Hughes 1995: 25). This approach to research enables one to observe and interact with people in their own territory and on their own terms, adapting, altering and formulating research strategies and analysis in light of the data collected in the ongoing research process (Burgess 1985: 8-9; Kirk and Miller 1986: 9).

Research methodologies are often designated as belonging to one of two categories, either quantitative or qualitative. These are often presented as opposing approaches to research, competing with one another for privilege and primacy. However, this is not necessarily the case and an ever-greater number of researchers prefer to use a combination of methods (Okuni 1997: 11). While this study is essentially qualitative, it does not deny the value of quantitative research in appropriate contexts. There is a certain sterility to the debate between qualitative and quantitative research, which leads some researchers to form a prior commitment to a research methodology, restricting their flexibility and potential in research (Brookfield 1984, 63; Janesick 1994: 215). Rather, research methodology must be adopted as a consequence of the research question instead of allowing it to dictate the form which the question itself will take.

The need for flexibility is essential in educational or sociological research in the developing world and is facilitated by research which is not rigidly fixed within stringent parameters, some of which may not even be appropriate in the South. As Namuddu says, “Research based on qualitative and phenomenological perspectives tends to be more realistic and faithful to local concepts and perceptions” (Namuddu 1991: 53). These research perspectives have real potential for contributing to educational theory, practice and policy in developing countries (Vulliamy et al. 1990: 23) as they more appropriately acknowledge and account for variants with the North and as they provide the voice of the subjects with greater force in the research. Conversely, quantitative data collection in the form of statistics analysis is often difficult in the South and is often questioned by Southerners themselves as concerns

its quality (Chapman 1991: 378; Ablo and Reinikka 1998: 30). This should provoke thoughtful reflection by Northerners when planning research in the South.

When Northern researchers do research in the South, it is all the more critical that they recognise the mindset and world-view which even unconsciously influence their approach to data. While the positivistic worldview may no longer dominate research even in the North, it is probable that “the common epistemology of the Western mind remains crudely positivistic” (Reason 1994b: 9). Such positivism is restrictive, preventing the critical analysis of many aspects of life as it is really lived.

At the same time, however, the positivistic self-understanding has restrictive effects; it limits the scope of essential reflection to within the boundaries of the empirical-analytical (and formal) sciences. I reject this masked normative function of a false consciousness. According to limited positivistic norms, whole problem-areas would have to be excluded from discussion and relinquished to irrational attitudes, although, in my opinion, they are perfectly open to critical elucidation (Habermas 1974: 195-196).

The problematic areas, excluded within positivistic research, are often sociological in nature. They deal with human subjects who, unlike the objects of natural science, have a way of resisting causal explanations and the generalisations that follow from natural science (Giddens 1974: 13). Educational sociological research deals with human nature and behaviour in the context of the learning environment. Positivistic approaches are less successful in this field of study than in the natural sciences due to the “immense complexity of human nature and the elusive and intangible quality of social phenomena” which contrast strikingly with the order and regularity of the natural world (Cohen and Manion 1994: 12). Additionally, the field of theological studies, with its emphasis on metaphysics and the spiritual, which are not empirically quantifiable, and the concept of the personal ownership of knowledge are areas of study which, by their very nature, may elude the reach of quantifiable, empirical research.

The nature of this research, then, demands a qualitative approach that is capable of penetrating the issues that are being pursued. It must address larger interpretations of the forces that shape both researcher and the researched (Kincheloe and McLaren 1994: 144). It requires a research approach that is holistic in so far as it attempts to

recognise the complex multifaceted contextual aspects of human behaviour. This qualitative approach deliberately seeks to avoid the manipulation of variables or the isolation of variables from the wider totality (Brock-Utne 1996, 609). Instead, it emphasises processes, meaning and the “value-laden nature of inquiry” (Denzin and Lincoln 1994b: 4). This form of investigation enlivens the human element of research, igniting a passion for understanding people (Janesick 1994: 217) and their multifaceted responses to learning and education.

MULTI-DIMENSIONAL RESEARCH PARADIGM: GROUNDED, CRITICAL RESEARCH

Effective research must be defined by the objectives of the study and the focus of the research questions. Consequently, this study adopts a multi-dimensional approach to qualitative research, combining facets of critical social research with grounded theory. Such an approach gives priority to the voice of the participants and the emergent theory while providing a critical theoretical framework for analysis, as explained in chapter three, without ideologically preconditioning outcomes.

Qualitative research is, by its very nature, adaptable and therefore potentially very incisive if care is taken in its development both before and during the actual data collection. It is inherently multimethod in focus (Denzin and Lincoln 1994b: 2). Its strength is its ability to flex, to do many things and to pursue a variety of aspects of human behaviour and education at the same time.

Qualitative research is an interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, and sometimes counterdisciplinary field. It cross-cuts the humanities, the social sciences, and the physical sciences. Qualitative research is many things at the same time. It is multiparadigmatic in focus. Its practitioners are sensitive to the value of the multimethod approach (Lincoln and Denzin 1994: 576).

This flexibility of qualitative research, not only methodologically but also paradigmatically, provides the potential for great richness in both discovery and analysis.

Aspects of both theory testing research and theory construction research are combined in this study, in order to apply a critical and liberating perspective while maintaining a discovery stance concerning data collection and analysis. The intrinsic

exploratory nature of qualitative research (Kirk and Miller 1986: 17) combined with a critical theoretical stance is particularly appropriate to this study's analysis of the importance of the ownership of knowledge in light of discursive critical literacy in education. It takes a "middle-range approach" which tends "to emphasize the importance of the collective and institutional aspects of society and their impact on the lives of individuals" (Layder 1993: 5). The collective, institutional and cultural aspects of current theological education in Uganda, and their impact upon the individual as well as the collective understanding of the ownership of theological knowledge and the use of it within the church, drive this research.

A multi-dimensional approach facilitates the critical interface between general theory and data discovery. The researcher took care to avoid imposing an inappropriate theoretical framework upon the research data and, even more importantly, upon the research participants. When research is conducted by a Northerner in the South, there is a need to "maintain the connections between the processes of theorizing and the world view of the subjects" (Vulliamy et al. 1990: 86). Western theoretical frameworks, derived as they are within the context of the North, may not always fit in the worldview of subjects in the South and may hold research hostage to theorising which is inappropriate in the research area.

This study pushes beyond simply offering "one more account" (Hammersley 1998: 142), by relating findings to wider theoretical constructs. Contribution to the development of theory is central to qualitative research's participation in the development of knowledge (Eisner 1997: 7; Hammersley 1990: 135; Hammersley 1998: 142). Theory enables research to extend its reach back to cover the past and then to project forward to account for the future (Clark 2000: 186). Real benefit, then, may be derived from maintaining a "dialogue between general theory and emergent theory" (Layder 1993: 170). It is just this sort of dialogue which this study seeks to develop.

Multi-dimensional research, then, endeavours to utilise multiple methods to enable the emergence of data and theory, while still maintaining a theoretical and critical stance. This enables emergent theory to be analysed and critiqued in light of relevant theory and literature, avoiding the multiplication of numerous 'cases' which are

considered so culturally unique that they add little to the understanding of those dimensions of humanity which unite the human race as well. It allows for the uniqueness of individual situations and cases while also acknowledging the common factors that draw human beings together.

Research, thus understood, builds bridges between opposing understandings of the human condition and theoretical stance. In so doing, it is able to draw from the valuable aspects of apparently diverse positions, while still recognising their separate presuppositions. The 'bridging' approach to multi-dimensional research is not simply another metaphor for triangulation in research. It is distinct in that the focus of 'bridging' is in "using several methodological strategies to link aspects of different sociological perspectives, not to discover indisputable facts about a single social reality" (Miller 1997: 25). The bridging approach "seeks to make different perspectives mutually informative, not to obscure or deny their distinctive features" (Miller 1997: 41). This study attempts to discover data and allow theory to emerge while simultaneously analysing the emergent theory through a critical discursive literacy stance.

GROUNDED THEORY

Grounded theory involves a qualitative approach to data collection that facilitates the emergence or generation of theory. It is based on the "systematic generating of theory from data, that itself is systematically obtained from social research" (Glaser 1978: 2). The distinctive feature of grounded theory is that theory is derived or discovered from data (Glaser and Strauss 1967: 1; Strauss and Corbin 1998: 12) rather than using data to confirm or test theory. Research, then, becomes primarily a discovery process.

One of the strengths of the grounded theory approach is the natural 'fit' between data and theory when theory is discovered through data. Data is not forced into a pre-existing framework in order to make it work within a preconceived theory. Rather, since it emerges from the research itself, it should work effectively and naturally to explain the theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967: 2).

Theory building through the use of grounded theory would apparently necessitate a theory free mindset when first approaching data discovery. Although purists may adopt such a stance, the concept of 'bridging' enables a more realistic approach and is not inconsistent with grounded theory itself. Glaser notes the importance of entering the research setting with as few predetermined ideas as possible, especially those that are logically deducted such as a prior hypothesis, if theoretical sensitivity is to be maintained (Glaser 1978: 2-3). The researcher must be careful not to approach the research with a well thought out design or pre-conceived concepts. The concepts which develop within the research should emerge or be generated out of the data (Glaser and Strauss 1967: 23; Strauss and Corbin 1998: 34).

Yet one cannot completely divorce one's self from pre-existing theory or from literature which is related to the research field. The object is to maintain an honest openness, which allows the data collected to speak for itself.

Nevertheless, no sociologist can possibly erase from his mind all the theory he knows before he begins his research. Indeed the trick is to line up what one takes as theoretically possible or probable with what one is finding in the field. Such existing sources of insights are to be cultivated, though not at the expense of insights generated by the qualitative research, which are still closer to the data (Glaser and Strauss 1967: 253).

Critical analysis of the emergent concepts and theory need not be inconsistent with grounded theory principles as long as the concepts and theory are naturally emergent from the data and are then subjected to critical analysis in light of more general theory and research.

CRITICAL SOCIAL RESEARCH

Critical research enables critique of data in light of its effect upon people and their ability to use knowledge to transform their world. It adds purpose and clarity to the research questions, guides the development of the research process and enables the analysis of data through the application of critical theory. The project of critical theorists is "nothing less than the radical restructuring of society toward the ends of reclaiming historic cultural legacies, social justice, the redistribution of power, and the achievement of truly democratic societies" (Lincoln and Denzin 1994: 580). Critical theory, as applied to this study, focuses the research upon the right and need

for theological students to own theological knowledge, using it as agents for effective and appropriate application to their own society.

Critical research concentrates upon the need to resist forces that distort, control or silence the voice of the oppressed.⁷³ It emphasises the taking back of voice and the reclaiming of narrative “for one’s own rather than adapting to the narratives of a dominant majority” (Lincoln and Denzin 1994: 580). It is critical because its aim is to “shatter the illusion of observed ‘reality’” (Harvey 1990: 196). It endeavours to go beyond simple explanatory or interpretive approaches, penetrating the fabric of educational systems to identify elements that control or suppress the oppressed. It leads to three related lines of enquiry.

First, what is essentially going on? ...Second, why has this historically been the case? ...Third, what structures reproduce this state of affairs? (Harvey 1990: 209)

This study asks precisely these kinds of questions.

Additionally, it is cognisant of the fact that just as the oppressed may become agents of change, they may also collude to some degree in the very social structures which serve to oppress them. This research, then, examines in detail the manner in which people enable social structures that are oppressive (Harvey 1990: 210). Without such an examination and evaluation, the goal of liberation remains elusive and agency is frustrated. Anthony Giddens suggests that most forms of structural sociology have emphasised the constraining influences of society while neglecting the actions of individuals that contribute to those same constraining influences. He proposes that structure is always both enabling and constraining due to the inherent relations between structure and agency (Giddens 1984: 169). He terms this approach to agency and power as “structuration theory.”

Structural constraints do not operate independently of the motives and reasons that agents have for what they do. ...The structural properties of

⁷³ The concept of ‘voice’ was used by Hirschman to describe the attempt by customers or members of an organisation to repair or improve deteriorating circumstances through communicating complaints, grievances and proposals for improvement. He explained that it is often used in the political sense of articulating opinion, criticism and protest (Hirschman 1970; Hirschman 1992: 77).

social systems do not act, or 'act on', anyone like forces of nature to 'compel' him or her to behave in any particular way (Giddens 1984: 181).

This concept is helpful in that it promotes a balanced approach to restrictions in society. It emphasises the dual role of the oppressed as restricted by outside forces, yet acknowledges that in some ways they also contribute to their own oppression.

Critical research is assisted in uncovering these dynamics of agency and power by what might be termed 'critical ethnography'. This is an attempt by critical theorists to appropriate the qualitative data discovery methods of ethnographic research to enrich and ground critical research (Harvey 1990: 204; Kincheloe and McLaren 1994: 141). Ethnographic research has been co-opted by many disciplines with the rise of qualitative research because of its clear focus upon people and their behaviour within the context of localised culture. As Hitchcock and Hughes state, "Ethnography is about portraying people" (Hitchcock and Hughes 1995: 120). This emphasis on people is equally central to critical social research.

The coupling of ethnographic research with a critical approach is also helpful in maintaining an open stance to new data. It enables the voice of the people to form and direct the findings. This is because the aim of ethnography is to understand (Fetterman 1984: 13; Wolcott 1984: 177). Understanding people requires observation and listening to what they say and why they say what they say. It emphasises exploring the nature of educational phenomena by working with relatively unstructured data (Atkinson and Hammersley 1994: 248). Understanding people requires seeing them as more than 'subjects' of research. It entails treating them as participants in discovery. Dialogue among them as participants and between them and the researcher serves to clarify meanings at the level of question posing and data collection (Gitlin and Russell 1994: 185). This must precede any critical analysis of the 'structural' forces within the society or within the educational system. Ethnographic methods help to hold critical research accountable to the data as voiced by the people. They serve as a form of restraint upon critique until the data is discovered and understood on its own terms.

Yet critical theory also transforms ethnography by adding critique to understanding. Rather than settling for the ethnographic practice of making the strange appear

normal, it highlights the inconsistencies and inequities making the comfortable and familiar seem strange and disconcerting (Dippo 1994: 203). Critical analysis of ethnographic data, properly understood, becomes disruptive. But it becomes disruptive in order to enable the suppressed voice of the people to be heard clearly and in order to enable agency.

Multi-dimensional research, enhanced by bridging the concepts of emergent theory through grounded research with the theoretical and political critique of critical research, has the potential of becoming transformative in character. It is derived from the substantive and theoretical background developed in the previous chapters. It endeavours to understand, without preconceptions, the dynamics of orality, literacy and the hermeneutics employed in the search for meaning. This understanding is derived from the voice of those involved in all aspects of adult theological education in Uganda. It then provides analysis through critical discursive theory in order to go beyond the simple description of another case to enhance theory and potentially even practice. Such an approach to research is what Eisner would call “on the edge of methodological inquiry.” As Eisner states, “Edges can be treacherous, but they can also be exciting” (Eisner 1997: 4).

RESEARCH METHODS

The qualitative methods employed in this study have been carefully chosen in order to facilitate the collection of data which is appropriate and trustworthy. The selection of research methods only took place after the research questions had been defined and explained. The researcher’s experience of living and working in Uganda were also factors in determining which methods would yield the best results.

Methodology is more than the application of certain methods. Rather, in its classic sense, it is “the study of the epistemological assumptions implicit in specific methods” (Tuchman 1994: 306). This means that the methods employed must be consistent with the epistemological objectives of the study. As this research seeks to give voice to Ugandan stakeholders in theological education, methods have been chosen which engender the support and participation of ordinary people (Namuddu 1991: 63). They offer structure for comparability while maintaining flexibility for

emergent theory. This emergent theory is then analysed in the context of critical literacy theory to enable movement towards agency and transformation.

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Semi-structured interviews serve as an important methodological tool in this study in the attempt to give voice to the stakeholders.⁷⁴ The researcher found that one-to-one interviews were most effective with those who felt a greater degree of parity in position or status with the researcher himself. The most fruitful interviews, then, were with missionaries, church leaders and instructors. Some students appeared hesitant or cautious about being interviewed alone, particularly when they saw notes being taken of their responses.⁷⁵

The semi-structured interview was selected in order to facilitate the greatest depth possible while maintaining the essential structure which ensures comparability and effective data analysis. This style of interviewing is much more flexible than structured interviewing and is usually favoured by educational researchers (Hitchcock and Hughes 1995: 157). It allows the researcher to develop a more conversational style with respondents, enabling the probing of responses and the natural expansion of ideas or concepts raised. Its more natural setting enhances the possibility of the respondent becoming a participant in the research process instead of simply a subject from whom data is collected. Structure is maintained due to the pre-determined topics which the researcher desires to pursue, but the sequencing of those topics is flexible, allowing a natural conversational flow to develop and enabling the researcher to follow up interesting responses and new ideas or concepts

⁷⁴ See appendix four.

⁷⁵ The list in appendix five represents those interviews that were in-depth and included the taking of notes or the use of a tape recorder. The students most responsive in the semi-structured interview setting were those who knew the researcher in contexts other than just as a researcher. As will be seen, focus groups and PRA groups proved to provide valuable access to the voices of students. Thirty other informal interviews were conducted with students, which are not included in the list in appendix five. These were characterised by informal conversations through which the researcher queried important research concerns. Although notes were not taken formally, these interviews corroborated the findings of the more in-depth interviews.

(Robson 1993: 229, 238). Naturalness in conversation is very important in the Ugandan setting, as relationships are foundational for communication. Brusque or formal interviewing clashes with cultural norms and can serve to restrict open and honest dialogue.

The face to face aspect of interviewing and the flexibility of the semi-structured interview are crucial ingredients in the pursuit of trustworthy and valid data. Any form of communication, whether spoken or written retains a residue of ambiguity no matter how carefully questions are asked, responses are recorded and answers are coded. The interview's opposing characteristics of increased depth in data collection and the potential of increased subjectivity and bias on the part of the interviewer (Cohen and Manion 1994: 272) require a form of controlled art on the part of the researcher. Yet interviewing is one of the most powerful means at the researcher's disposal to begin to understand people clearly (Fontana and Frey 1994:361). Properly conducted, it enables the researcher to learn from the wealth of experiential, practical and propositional knowledge possessed by the respondents (Reason 1994a: 42).

Additionally, interviews enable the researcher to begin to understand the culture of the respondents and their community. When combined with other ethnographic methods such as observation, these insights from interviews create a window into the culture which is fundamental to the understanding of people's perceptions of the educational experience.

Semi-structured interviews also facilitate the emergence of ideas and concepts which may not have been anticipated by the researcher. The emergence of these concepts is fostered by allowing the lives and experiences of the respondents to speak without pre-designating categories and codes (Rubin and Rubin 1995:38).⁷⁶ This fosters the generation of theory. The emerging theory can then be tested through further interviews and changed as necessary.

⁷⁶ As fieldwork progressed, nineteen themes were noted as being recurrent and important in the interviews. These were arranged as codes, enabling data from one interview to intersect with other interview data so as to allow theory to emerge.

LIFE HISTORIES

Known alternately as life histories, life journeys, life stories and biographies, the narrative of a life as communicated orally through conversational interviews is a powerful tool for adding richness and greater dimension to other interview data. These narratives are constructed through the process of extensive and multiple interviews. They situate data in the greater context of life and the surrounding culture (Clifford 1994: 102). Developing life histories is a form of inquiry which enables the researcher to reach multiple goals and purposes simultaneously (Smith 1994: 302). They provide a window on the place and importance of a specific educational event or process in the context of life's stages and of other complimentary social change (Rubin and Rubin 1995:27; Serpell 1993:142). The value of locating the educational experience within the greater life history is also reflected in the increased depth of understanding which is gained and the perspective that the individual is able to give concerning changes in their own perception of their educational experience over time (Hitchcock and Hughes 1995: 189).

Telling their life stories provides space for the voice of those who have been ignored, oppressed and/or forgotten (Fontana and Frey 1994: 368). Since the oppressed are the sole primary authorities when it comes to telling their own life stories, they are free to respond out of a sense of unique competence. In telling the stories of personal experience, individuals reaffirm and create new perceptions of their own lives (Clandinin and Connelly 1994: 415).

This study incorporate insights from the life histories of two key church leaders⁷⁷ into the research in order to add continuity and breadth to the depth of other interview data.

⁷⁷ These life histories were elicited from leaders in the Church of Uganda and the Baptist Union of Uganda.

PARTICIPATION REFLECTION ACTION (PRA)

Participatory research has been effectively used to facilitate communities in reflecting together concerning issues of importance and to voice their own opinions and ideas. During the past decade, PRA has been used effectively in a variety of formulas which usually include combinations of participation and visual analysis (Chambers 1999: 1). The effectiveness of these research and appraisal techniques has been exemplified in many countries in the South. They have been notably used in Uganda by the REFLECT Project (Archer and Cottingham 1996).

PRA requires a participative mindset or world-view which recognises the quality and value of the participants' knowledge and discernment (Reason 1994c: 1). Such research encourages the insiders or stakeholders to communicate to one another and to the researcher (Chambers 1999: 3). It is particularly effective in enabling people, "especially those who are in some sense 'lowers' ... to present, share, enhance and analyse their knowledge of life and conditions, and to plan, act, monitor and evaluate" (Chambers 1999: 2).

Participatory research can provide the setting in which the participants determine the agenda and the direction of thought through their mutual analysis of adult education within their own contexts. They become agents instead of objects (Nelson and Wright 1995: 51), expressing their own reality instead of accepting an imposed reality (Chambers 1997: 103). Participatory research involves the community in actively generating the research themselves, thus giving them a sense of ownership.

A second advantage of the participatory approach is that it can be empowering. It is "most appropriate when the inquiry involves a relatively large number of people who are initially disempowered" (Reason 1994d: 335). As participants construct their own knowledge, they are empowered to use that knowledge to act as agents within their own society for positive change (Reason 1994d: 328). This is the process of *conscientization* which Freire popularised (Freire 1972).

It must be recognised that there are potential dangers and limitations inherent in the use of participatory research methods. "Local knowledge" or "people's knowledge", as derived through PRA, may be influenced by the outsider/researcher's agenda, by

local power relations, or by “local collusion in the planning consensus” as PRA participants seek to access or achieve perceived short term benefits (Mosse 2001). Particular attention must be given to the potential of “groupthink”, a set of “group dynamics that leads to evidently bad or wrong decisions being taken” (Cooke 2001: 112) and “self-surveillance and consensus building” (Kothari 2001: 142) among students who value consensus and community. However, this research found PRA groups to be a beneficial component of a multi-method approach. Participation facilitated unusually free communication on the part of students. Care was taken to involve all students in two of the schools in PRA in order to avoid power problems that may be present when participants are selected. Additionally, the researcher was careful to phrase questions so as not to convey any potential agenda. There was also no potential for short term benefits or gains to the participants, which might skew their discussion. Finally, the perspectives and comments derived from PRA sessions was triangulated with data received through other methods such as interviews and observation.

This study applies the PRA approach with four groups of theological students in the attempt to enable them to communicate to one another about their theological education and the process of learning and using theological knowledge.⁷⁸ The peer-centred communication in these PRA circles enabled students to contribute ideas freely and enthusiastically. The method employs the development of visuals on the ground in order to facilitate what Chambers terms a “democracy of the ground” (Chambers 1999: 4). Students were arranged in a circle and were encouraged to portray their theological training and development through co-operative mapping. The development of a sense of the locus and ownership of knowledge is traced through these maps in the following chapters.

FOCUS GROUPS

Focus groups extend the interviewing process beyond the individual to a group of individuals. This interviewing technique can be effective whenever the issue being

⁷⁸ See appendix four.

researched affects an established group of people (Robson 1993:241). In this study, focus groups also provided an environment of peers which facilitated more natural and open participation by students. When doing educational research which involves the possibility of potential changes and when shared impressions are desired from those who are active within the educational scheme, focus groups can serve to facilitate the collection of appropriate data (Rubin and Rubin 1995: 27).

Group interviews have the advantage of bringing a group of people together who share a common concern or interest. The process of interviewing them together may stimulate recall among the participants. It is also able to produce rich data as respondents' comments stimulate other responses and may develop a cumulative and elaborate description of perceptions and events (Fontana and Frey 1994: 365). Care must be taken though to avoid potential problems such as the dominance of particular individuals. The interviewer must demonstrate real skill as a moderator in order to encourage effective participation by all the group members (Fontana and Frey 1994: 365; Robson 1993: 241; Rubin and Rubin 1995: 140).

Focus groups provided greater access to students, in this study, than did personal interviews. This was particularly the case among RCC and COU students. Their respect for teachers, combined with their hesitancy in English, made them feel more comfortable in a group.⁷⁹ The researcher also conducted focus groups among Western missionaries and COU priests who are involved in theological education in Uganda.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Although the COU students at the Kisinga Divinity College seemed to feel that they should speak English since classes were in English and the focus group was held in a classroom, the researcher did use Lukonzo with them as well to enable them to feel more free to speak. The focus group held with catechists at the RCC College in Nsenyi was conducted primarily in Lukonzo. The challenge for the researcher, when conducting the focus groups in other languages, was to be able to lead the group and record comments (in English) at the same time. When the researcher began to write notes, the students became quiet. As a result, the focus group notes had to be filled in more completely after the exercise was completed and the researcher had returned home. The use of a tape recorder in these groups would have increased participants' hesitancy.

⁸⁰ See appendix four.

OBSERVATION

This study employs observation methods both in the classroom setting and among students outside of the classroom. Research as observation is, in a sense, a natural and necessary part of all social research since “we cannot study the social world without being part of it” (Atkinson and Hammersley 1994: 249). Yet, the observation used in this study attempts to record significant features of classroom and extra-curricular activities from outside the situation in so far as is possible. The objective of such observation is to “remove part of the subjectivity which occurs when individuals describe events” (Croll 1986: 4).

Observation focuses upon the theological discourses which are used by students and faculty both in and out of the classroom. It includes observation of the time spent in the classroom in various forms of theological literacy as compared to oral forms of theological interaction.⁸¹ Such time sampling is valuable in assessing the real discourses that are used in these various settings (Robson 1993: 220; Sideridis 1998: 21). Observation must be as structured as possible within the cultural setting in order to ensure maximal observer consistency (Robson 1993: 221).

Care must be taken to minimise participant reactivity to the observer. This is further complicated as the researcher is a Westerner and an outsider. The obtrusiveness of observation can be minimised by avoiding eye contact or verbal interaction with participants during the observation itself. Allowing sufficient time for participants to adapt to the observer’s presence is also helpful (Sideridis 1998: 23). The possibility of using Ugandan assistants in observation was explored, however, in order to ensure consistency in observation style and technique, assistants were not used.

During the fieldwork process, access to classrooms and students was found to be easier in some schools than in others. Although the RCC and COU diocesan

⁸¹ See appendix three.

leadership were very supportive,⁸² some participants in the schools and communities seemed slightly more cautious.⁸³ This required the researcher to explain clearly the reasons for his interest in their colleges and to offer his services, such as teaching or transportation, to them as well, when possible.

SURVEY

A simple survey was used to collect background information from students.⁸⁴ This includes information concerning age, vernacular language, years of formal schooling previous to theological training and years of involvement in the church. Such historical and background data is useful in developing a portrait of the adults involved in theological education. It also begins to address the important problem of language as used in the home and as used in education (Namuddu 1991: 56-57).

The survey is primarily focused upon gathering factual and background data rather than data concerning attitudes, values, beliefs and motives, because there is a very real concern that respondents may not report their attitudes and motives accurately (Robson 1993: 128). This possibility is augmented by the politeness of Ugandans in general which could lead them to answer in ways that they expect will please the researcher. In addition, the use of surveys is not something with which the community being studied has had extensive experience. This could easily create confusion among them as to the purpose and function of the survey itself. The

⁸² The researcher's previous relationships with most of these leaders and particularly with the BUU national leaders was instrumental in providing such co-operation.

⁸³ When a group of COU priests arrived for a meeting during a week of observation in the COU college at Kamuli, the researcher overheard several of them discussing among themselves why this outsider was here for so long, since he wasn't teaching. They eventually questioned the researcher himself. In the end, the diocesan education secretary and the director of the college explained to them that the bishop himself had suggested that the researcher conduct this study in this particular college. This appeared to dissipate their concern and the discussion moved on to other things. The researcher also agreed to their request that he contribute to the college by teaching. Although this enabled the researcher to offer something in return to college, it also reduced time for observation and may have reinforced the students' perception of the researcher as an authority figure who was distanced from themselves.

⁸⁴ See appendix two.

potential problem of internal validity related to any questions which probe attitudes and motives (Robson 1993: 125) must be critiqued in light of the information offered through interviews.

RESEARCHER'S LOG

The concept of the “reflective practitioner” was popularised by Schön as he explained the process of “reflection-in-action” which he suggested is the key to how practitioners deal with situations of “uncertainty, instability, uniqueness, and value conflict” (Schön 1983: 50). The research process itself, especially one which adopts grounded research as a general framework for data discovery, is characterised by these same forces of uncertainty, instability and surprise. The ‘outsider’ researcher working in Uganda must be doubly aware of information, data and emergent ideas which instil an element of contradiction, confusion or surprise into anticipated research findings. These events need to be recorded and analysed as they occur, in order to facilitate learning and adaptation by the researcher during the research process.

Throughout the duration of the field research, a log was kept by the researcher in order to record reflections concerning the data as it was assembled. This enabled the researcher to document the process and the surrounding circumstances which may have influenced the research practice itself (Rubin and Rubin 1995: 86-87). More importantly, it facilitated the emergence of new areas for research or emphases that needed to be pursued. It allowed emergent theory to influence the ongoing research process, so that new ideas could be tested, challenged and pursued.

RESEARCH PLAN

This research is a comparative study between theological education for adults with limited formal schooling in three Christian denominations in two regions of Uganda. It was conducted between October 2000 and July 2001. The Christian denominations involved in the research in this study are the Baptist Union of Uganda (BUU), the Church of Uganda (COU or Anglican) and the Roman Catholic Church (RCC). These churches offer comparability in that they are spread throughout Uganda and are all under Ugandan leadership. Yet, they offer potentially valuable

contrasts as they provide differing theological education programmes, which operate under different ecclesiastical structures.

Regions within Uganda were selected in order to stimulate comparative analysis by maintaining critical similarities while planning for important differences culturally and historically. Comparability suggests that the regions must maintain certain minimal similarities. They are both located within dominant Bantu areas of the country, which facilitates the researcher linguistically since he speaks two Bantu languages. These regions also retain important cultural similarities shared by the Bantu peoples.

The regions represent significant differences as well. One is located in eastern Uganda while another is in the west. The eastern area is situated in a more industrialised centre than the west and has a greater concentration of expatriate missionaries. Additionally, although both areas are predominantly Bantu, the people in the two regions represent different cultural and linguistic groups.

Research was conducted in both regions throughout the field research period. This enabled the researcher to be present when most convenient for the participants and when he could obtain the appropriate data. Secondly, this stimulated comparability and contrast between the regions and the institutions.

POPULATION SAMPLE

A variety of community members and stakeholders participated in the research, in order collect data which reflects the diversity of the people who are involved in theological education in Uganda (Rubin and Rubin 1995: 69). This necessitated the involvement of church leaders as well as students. It also required the involvement of both expatriate Westerners and Ugandans who are directly involved in the development or implementation of theological education systems. Participants were carefully selected to facilitate comparability between the different denominations by maintaining correspondence in terms of position within the church hierarchies and their respective educational roles as much as possible.

The following population samples were specifically addressed, then, during the research process.

1. Ugandan Church Leaders

Ugandans who have been designated by their respective religious communities to plan, promote and institute theological training programmes are central to this study. They are usually highly educated and among the elite of the church community. They have progressed through theological education programmes themselves and may well have become acquainted with a variety of educational systems. They are also aware of the needs of the Church from the perspective of the Church's leadership. Whether they serve on theological committees or lead actual theological schools, their influence on the future direction of such education is fundamental. These individuals were interviewed individually.

2. Missionaries

Many missionaries continue to be involved both by developing and by teaching in Ugandan theological education. They are often the conduits of foreign donor support and play a critical role in the development of curriculum. As has been shown in the first chapter, missionaries originally set up theological education in Uganda and so play a central role both historically and in the present. Missionaries were interviewed individually and in focus groups where appropriate.

3. Instructors

Instructors are the implementers of theological education. Whether they are involved in its development or not, by their pedagogical practice and by virtue of their proximity to the students, they give shape to education itself. Interviews were conducted with them in order to ascertain their understanding of their role in transmitting knowledge, formulating knowledge and the ownership of knowledge. Pedagogical approaches were also observed in the classroom setting.

4. Students

Theological students themselves are a major focus of this study. Interviews, focus groups and PRA were conducted with them in order to facilitate gaining an understanding of their perception of the locus and ownership of knowledge and the appropriateness of the educational process. Observation of students took place both in and out of the classroom while at the institutions in order to understand their discourse patterns and uses of orality and literacy.

5. Graduates

Those who have completed their theological training and are now actively involved in church work offer an alternative perspective to that of current students. Having completed their courses and having entered church ministry, they have had time to reflect on the appropriateness of their studies. They have also had the opportunity to begin the process of putting the theological knowledge they gained to work. They were interviewed in order to hear their reflections upon their education experience and to understand how they use theological knowledge practically.

TRUSTWORTHINESS OF DATA

Qualitative research has enlivened considerable debate concerning means of assessing the validity and reliability of research data. The questioning of modernism and positivism's dominance in the Western world has led to post-structuralist, postmodernist, constructivist and interpretivist representations of reality. The parameters and definitions of formerly accepted norms in research have been extended. The extensive use of qualitative methods in the social sciences has highlighted the necessity of this debate as researchers have sought to represent individuals and communities clearly and fairly within dynamic and changing social situations. This study adopts an approach which emphasises the need for trustworthiness in research data. This is accomplished through the application of triangulation within and between qualitative methods. Plausibility and credibility are

sustained through the careful recording of data and by revisiting emergent concepts which need further clarification or substantiation.

VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Reliability and validity have long been the criteria of assessment for research. Defined simply, “‘reliability’ is the extent to which a measurement procedure yields the same answer however and whenever it is carried out; ‘validity’ is the extent to which it gives the correct answer” (Kirk and Miller 1986: 19). Together, these criteria are purported to produce objectivity, which is “the simultaneous realization of as much reliability and validity as possible” (Kirk and Miller 1986: 20). These criteria have served long and well in the natural sciences, but their appropriateness in educational and social research that deals primarily with the attitudes, perceptions and motives of human beings has been debated vigorously.

Research that focuses on human beings as subjects, rather than objects, must accept that subjects cannot be subjected to experimentation in the same sense as other objects in the natural world. Qualitative researchers have questioned the effectiveness of replicable measurement procedures to represent the diversity and dynamics of human research (Denzin and Lincoln 1994a; Gitlin and Russell 1994; Kincheloe and McLaren 1994: 151; Lincoln and Guba 1985). The qualitative difference between the cause and effect laws and systems of the natural sciences and the human relations dynamic of the social sciences calls for different assessment criteria for data and theory.

New terms of assessment have been suggested by researchers representing a tremendous variety of perspectives, in the attempt to maintain rigour and quality of research while simultaneously and appropriately reflecting the very fluid dynamics of human research. In their early writing about grounded theory, Glaser and Strauss suggested the importance of the “plausibility” of data and its resultant emergent theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967: 233). Such plausibility could be established, they suggested, by using sufficient methods that were the best suited to the socially structured necessities of the research situation. Alternatively, Gitlin and Russell have suggested that “truthfulness” or validity should be provided for not by the extraction

of data by individuals “armed with a set of research procedures, but rather as a mutual process, provided by researcher and those studied” (Gitlin and Russell 1994: 187). According to them, the researcher’s knowledge is not to be considered more ‘legitimate’ than that of the subjects. Instead they work together to come to a mutual understanding, which in turn provides rigour that can be used as a test of truthfulness.

Qualitative data is not easily assembled and compiled as facts. Rather, its analysis requires the careful and transparent representation of data and interpretation of meaning in order to maintain validity (Altheide and Johnson 1994: 489). These interpretations may then be tested by asking the subjects themselves to confirm whether they responsibly reflect the meaning the subjects intended. Such an interpretive approach seeks to discover “how people understand their worlds and how they create and share meanings about their lives” (Rubin and Rubin 1995:34). This approach recognises the complexity of human life and the importance of time and context due to the constant change that is a normal part of human life. It argues that not everything of importance in the human realm is measurable (Rubin and Rubin 1995: 35), but this does not preclude the possibility of accurately representing these important dimensions of life.

Some qualitative researchers have simply rejected ‘validity’ as an appropriate criterion for the assessment of research. Lincoln and Denzin even refer to the “unmasking of validity-as-authority” (Lincoln and Denzin 1994: 579). ‘Trustworthiness’ has been proposed as a term that might replace ‘validity’ in qualitative studies. It is suggested that the term ‘trustworthiness’ recognises a more natural way of approaching research in the social world (Lincoln and Guba 1985: 294-301). The research may be trustworthy if it credibly reflects the current perceptions of the subjects, drawing plausible conclusions which accurately reflect the larger social setting within which the researched community is located.

To a critical researcher, validity means much more than the traditional definitions of internal and external validity usually associated with the concept. Traditional research has defined *internal validity* as the extent to which a researcher’s observations and measurements are true descriptions of a particular reality; *external validity* has been defined as the degree to which such descriptions can be accurately compared with other groups.

Trustworthiness, many have argued, is a more appropriate word to use in the context of critical research. It is helpful because it signifies a different set of assumptions about research purposes than does *validity* (Kincheloe and McLaren 1994: 151 [emphasis in original]).

The critical researcher desires to represent the voice of the oppressed correctly while also facilitating their development of agency. The researcher is able to ensure the accuracy of interpretations of information offered by the subjects by making sure that the subjects themselves accept these interpretations as accurate representations of their voice. Yet even with such confirmation, there may not be complete agreement concerning the significance of these interpretations because the critical researcher may see the effects of oppression as represented in the voice of those researched – effects that those researched may not see (Kincheloe and McLaren 1994: 151). The point at which the researcher's interpretation of the social situation extends beyond that of the researched needs to be clearly specified. This is the point at which critical research may be agency enabling.

The traditional concept of 'reliability' must also be clarified if a central aim of research is to develop voice. As Gitlin and Russell point out, reliability cannot be based on duplicating procedures if the diverse voices of individuals are to be heard accurately (Gitlin and Russell 1994: 187-188). People change, as do their opinions, within time and context. Voice, then, must reflect accurately the setting which prompted it. Interviewing which is seen as a dynamic meaning-making occasion necessitates different criteria.

One cannot simply expect answers on one occasion to replicate those on another because they emerge from different circumstances of production. Similarly, the validity of answers derives not from their correspondence to meanings held within the respondent, but from their ability to convey situated experiential realities in terms that are locally comprehensible (Silverman 1997: 117).

The traditional concept of reliability depends upon certain constants which make replication possible. Such constants are not normally a part of human social life and cannot be expected in the interview process. Yet, this approach enables validity to be assessed apart from the respondent, demanding that the expression of the individual's voice must be comprehensible within the local setting.

The search for voice and its trustworthy representation is not sufficient, however. The views represented in that voice should also be assessed as to their validity in light of other criteria. These views should be plausible and credible or they will require other evidence which supports their validity (Hammersley 1998: 142). This resonates with the claim that criteria of validity must be located outside of the respondent. Plausibility as evidence of validity maintains validity as an effective concept.

The voice or perceptions expressed by respondents may be shown to be locally comprehensible and plausible through the use of triangulation. The form of triangulation most appropriate for this task is what has been termed "triangulation within a method," which suggests that the reality of a situation is not to be understood from a single viewpoint (McFee 1992: 216). Instead, several viewpoints of a particular situation are collected in the attempt to obtain a composite analysis which accounts for all of the various perspectives. Triangulation within the interviewed population sample is used in this study in order to address the question of the ownership of knowledge from the perspective of students, graduates, teachers and church leaders. These varied samples reflect the diversity of perspectives within the theological education community in Uganda. By using this form of triangulation, the validity of voice is tested by whether or not it is comprehensible within the perspective of other viewpoints.

Triangulation between methods is used in order to provide evidence for the trustworthiness of data. This is obtained through interviews, focus groups, PRA and observation. The problem of validating issues, concepts and ideas emerging from observation (Adler and Adler 1994: 381) is clarified and enhanced by comments obtained through interviews while the perspectives conveyed during interviews, focus groups and PRA are examined through observation. The data collected through these diverse methods is compared and analysed in the attempt to develop evidence of trustworthiness or validity within the situational context. The combination of participatory and interviewing methods with observation provides rigour (Adler and Adler 1994: 382).

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Trustworthiness also depends on the processes used to collect and analyse field data. The collection and analysis of data in this qualitative study was concurrent with and recurrent throughout the research project. Analysis is not an activity left until the end of the research period, but needs to take place throughout the period of data collection (Okuni 1997: 19). Research analysis may be described as the “interplay between researchers and data” (Strauss and Corbin 1998: 13). As data is collected, the researcher examines it and reflects upon it. Categories and concepts begin to emerge which stimulate new concerns, areas for investigation and possible emergent theory. Research in which the analyst collects, codes and analyses data continuously enables the researcher to alter and fine tune the data collection over time as theory emerges. This is termed “theoretical sampling” (Glaser and Strauss 1967: 45).

Coding was used to decipher recurrent and divergent categories or themes. These categories were grouped conceptually, facilitating the emergence of theory. The discernment of categories was strategic in the ongoing planning of further data collection and enabled the research to become increasingly precise and focused.

Coding gets the analyst off the empirical level by fracturing the data, then conceptually grouping it into codes that then become the theory which explains what is happening in the data (Glaser 1978: 55).

The process of coding breaks down the data into component parts which are not readily detected at first. Relationships between categories found within the data reveal issues of central importance. Continual analysis, categorisation and data collection results in the generation of theory around a “core category” (Glaser 1978: 93). As theory emerges, it can then be tested through further data collection until sufficient rigour is established.

TRANSFERABILITY

The bridging of grounded theory and critical research as proposed in this study additionally requires a different approach to the issue of external validity or generalisability. As noted earlier, this research attempts to go beyond simply providing another educational and ethnographic account. The concern for bridging

the emergent data, concepts and perceptions of a specific situation which is contextually bound in time and space with the broader theoretical framework demands a response to the question of the generalisability of the data or emergent theory.

Data, concepts, theories and conclusions found in this study cannot simply be generalised to other settings because the exact temporal, local and cultural components are not replicable anywhere else. Yet, the findings in this study should maintain a degree of 'transferability' to other settings of substantial similarity. Such transferability should be in direct correspondence to the degree of similarity or "fittingness" (Lincoln and Guba 1985: 124) between the contexts of those other settings and the context of the study.

The idea of transferability is an important concept to be maintained if qualitative research is to play an effective role in the development of general theory. It necessarily departs from the concept of generalisability because of its locus in human research. Kincheloe and McLaren state, "The ability to make pristine generalizations from one research study to another accepts a one-dimensional, cause-effect universe" (Kincheloe and McLaren 1994: 151). Research with and about people and their lived experience simply cannot be accommodated in such a one-dimensional scheme. Yet, there are similarities between different peoples just as there are differences that set cultures apart from one another. Critical research must acknowledge the relational character of cultures and allow for intercultural critique, avoiding the form of cultural relativism that seeks to universalise specificity (Young 1997: 501, 503). This suggests, then, that theory which emerges in one setting should have transferable benefits. The degree of transferability depends upon the degree of similarity in the situational and social contexts.

This study also critiques the categories and theory generated through the data collection and analysis process in light of critical research theory. This enables the emergent theory to be subjected to a secondary critique, forcing it to respond to the analysis of critical social theory. The emergent theory therefore becomes integrated into broader theoretical frameworks while still maintaining its specific value and validity within its own particular temporal and cultural context.

The data and findings of this study, then, must be trustworthy and should be transferable. Trustworthiness or validity of the data was maintained through triangulation within and between methods, while the analysis and coding of data was continual throughout the research process. Trustworthiness of data is not simply accepted because it represents the voice of specific respondents, but also because it is found to be plausible and comprehensible within the researched community. This ensures that the voice of the respondents is represented accurately. The transferability of the findings should be in correlation to the similarity between this and other settings.

POTENTIAL OBSTACLES

The collection of data in all forms of research inevitably encounters obstacles. Those that can be envisaged in advance should be considered carefully. Others will come unpredictably and simply need to be dealt with during the research project itself. There are several potential obstacles which quite predictably befall the kind of research conducted in this study. These include the benefits and hazards that accompany considerable previous involvement by the researcher in the researched community. Secondly, there are concerns for the welfare of and potential benefit to the researched community. Power relations between the researcher and the respondents as well as between different respondents must also be considered carefully. Fourthly, a cluster of issues revolves around the researcher as 'outsider' linguistically, culturally and nationally. Finally, there is the sensitive subject of whose voice is really heard through the research and its findings. Obstacles are not synonymous with impediments. When carefully considered, they can serve to increase the effectiveness and quality of research. These potential obstacles are addressed here in the hope that they will enrich the depth and value of this research.

As noted in the introduction, the researcher has lived and worked in Uganda since 1984. Most of this time, particularly since 1990, has been spent in different aspects of theological education, primarily but not exclusively, within the Baptist Union of Uganda. This research is an outgrowth of those years of experience. The researcher's cumulative exposure to the questions addressed in this study as well as to some of the respondents in the study must be recognised. Yet, when recognised

from the start, this personal experience need not become a negative or constraining element in the research process. Glaser and Strauss point out that personal experience and insights prior to or outside the study may serve as vital ingredients in grounded research and that “one should deliberately cultivate such reflections on personal experiences” (Glaser and Strauss 1967: 252). The ongoing interpersonal relationship that is developed with conversational partners during interviewing is natural and must be acknowledged (Rubin and Rubin 1995: 40-41). It is important to pay attention to how interviewees perceive questioners and how those perceptions may influence what they are willing to say. These relationships may diminish, skew or even facilitate their willingness to respond openly and honestly.

The effects of this research upon the theological education community in Uganda as well as the possible benefits which this community may receive from the research should be considered in advance. Some Western researchers have tended to impose their own supposedly enlightened cultural constructions on others (Stanfield II 1994b: 176). This type of behaviour has resulted in increased resistance to outside researchers and their agendas (Smith 1999: 172-173; Stanfield II 1994a: 174). People are treated as objects to be researched for either personal gain or the advancement of knowledge, but not necessarily for the sake of the people themselves.

Alternatively, research may be either for others, to assist the participants to use the research in advocacy or with others where participants and researcher work together to develop a balanced approach (Nelson and Wright 1995, 49). Going one step further, this research seeks to promote a mutual process of change in both the researcher and the researched community.

Yet the sentiment of one's own cultural insufficiency is what fuels – or ought to fuel – the desire for encounters with difference in the first place. Without it the other is merely objectified as separate and distant from self, placed in a space apart where its difference cannot threaten and where it can be dominated through projects of objectifying “explanation” (Hoffman 1999, 588).

Researching *with* then becomes dynamic. In a sense, both parties are being researched simultaneously and agency is not provided for others only, but for all

involved. 'Voice' becomes harmonious jazz; not one single melody, but the complementary melding together of alternative voices, each offering its own contribution to the other and potentially altering the course of the other.

Through qualitative methods, this research endeavours to value and give voice to the Ugandan theological education community. Dialogue and partnership between Ugandan church leaders and the researcher characterise it from origin to completion. Research, such as this, which is developed jointly with indigenous and non-indigenous participants purposively attempts to undercut the sense of 'being used' on the part of the researched community (Smith 1999: 178; Stanfield II 1994a: 167). It is based on an ongoing commitment to the researched community by the researcher which began long before this study and which is expected to continue on after the study is completed. It is a combination of what Tuhiwai Smith calls the "adoption model," in which the researcher is incorporated into the researched community and life in a life-long relationship and her "power sharing mode," in which the researcher seeks the meaningful support of the community in the development of the research enterprise (Smith 1999: 177).

The dynamics of power relations during the research are unavoidable. The researcher's position as a Westerner, a member of the missionary community and a developer and teacher of theological education in Uganda holds the potential for both benefit and detriment. His position may open doors of access among teachers, church leaders and missionaries, however, relations with younger students and graduates could potentially be strained by the perception of power differences between the researcher and these respondents.⁸⁵ There is always an aspect of power which is held by the questioner in interview settings simply by nature of the fact that the interviewer controls the setting, structure and use of interview material (Lee 1993: 107-111). The additional teacher/student and Westerner/Ugandan components only exacerbate the situation.

⁸⁵ Attention to this dynamic is what led to the increased use of focus groups and PRA groups rather than individual interviews with students.

These power dynamics were addressed as much as possible setting by setting. Interviews were conducted in casual, non-academic settings such as in homes, around a cup of tea or outside under a tree, in order to reduce the teacher/student divisions as much as possible. The use of PRA methods enabled what Chambers terms “putting the last first” or the reversing of power relations (Chambers 1993: 9). Respondents became researchers and the researcher became the learner. This reversal of roles assists in undoing the previously conceived power relationships during the data collection process. It also influenced the further development of the research as the reversal of roles enabled the students to develop not only data, but the emergent theory as well. The use of PRA methods among those respondents who might be intimidated by power differences is one way of placing the research tools in their hands. Co-operative development of the research is then possible not only with the upper level church leaders, but also with those who would normally be neglected or deemed unable to assist.

A fourth potential obstacle to effective research in this study is due to the inevitable positioning of the researcher as an ‘outsider’ at least in some respects. Although the researcher was born and raised in sub-Saharan Africa, his nationality, education and home culture still relegate him to outsider status. The insider/outsider framework is helpful, but like all generalisations, it does not provide for all the possible variables. There is a definite sense in which a Northern researcher doing research in the South is an outsider culturally, societally, even psychologically.

What is at least implicit in the insider/outsider researcher debate is that the autobiographies, cultures, and historical contexts of researchers matter; these determine what the researchers see and do not see, as well as their ability to analyze data and disseminate knowledge adequately (Stanfield II 1994b, 176).

Yet determining who the insiders are is even more complex. Each member of the host community or of the researched group will have a different definition of insider, as they bring with them different social roles and positions within the researched community. These personal biographies are complex and in a process of constant dynamic change. They affect the way in which both the researcher and the researched community members understand, process and disseminate knowledge.

The 'outsider' researcher is not necessarily excluded from doing valid research because of his 'outsider' status alone. In fact, there is a sense in which an outsider may notice that which the insider takes as common-place and thus ignores (Brock-Utne 1996, 610). At the same time, the outsider may also be blinded to essential aspects of the insider community that are clear to insiders because of their personal biography within the community. This calls for mutual help in 'seeing'. Far from excluding either of these parties from the research process, it emphasises their mutual benefit to one another.

The researcher as an 'outsider' and a Westerner need not be trapped by the fear of ethnocentrism. No one can completely and arbitrarily abandon their culture of origin. However, it is possible to develop a "bi-cultural or hybrid awareness" (Young 1997: 504). Openness to the adventure of living in and understanding other cultures is possible. One's own culture is then adapted and modified through time and experience. This process may take place in both the researcher and the researched community, enabling development, mutual stimulation and mutual change.

One of the greatest struggles with being an outsider is that the researcher may attract unhelpful attention to himself simply because of his foreigner status. This may be accentuated in the RCC and COU colleges due to the novelty of having a Baptist missionary observing in classrooms. Informal time spent with instructors and students and participatory research methods can help to limit the 'outsider effect'.

Language may also be a hurdle for the Western researcher in Uganda. The researcher's fluency in English, the national language and the language of most educational instruction, and Kiswahili, which is often used in conversation between rural representatives of different linguistic groups, offers access to a substantial amount of the relevant conversations and will assist in observation practices. The researcher is also fluent in Lukonzo, the language of the Bakonjo in western Uganda. The similarity between Bantu languages enables the researcher to follow the flow of some general conversations in other languages as well, providing a means of double-checking data which may be erroneous simply because of linguistic errors.

Recognition of the evident obstacles which must be faced in this research provides the opportunity for them to be transformed so that they become beneficial to the study. The researcher's personal experience and status within Uganda's theological education community influences the dynamics of power relations and insider/outsider issues in unique but potentially mutually beneficial ways. The impact of the research upon the researched community must be mutually determined by Ugandans and the researcher alike through co-operative participation in the development and progression of the research at all stages.

CONCLUSION

The multi-dimensional methodological approach adopted in this study is shaped by a worldview which values the situated uniqueness of cultural and educational contexts while still retaining cognisance of the common aspects of all human experience. It employs qualitative research methodologies in order to discover key elements and perceptions of the ownership of knowledge in Ugandan theological education. Data collection and theory generation are based upon the principles of grounded theory and bridged with critical social theory. Particular emphasis is placed upon the influence of literacy and orality in the development of a hermeneutic which facilitates the pursuit of meaning and the ownership of knowledge among adult students who have limited previous formal schooling.

The scope of this research encompasses theological education in three Christian denominations, thus increasing comparability, reliability and breadth of data. Data from theological education programmes within the Catholic Church and the Church of Uganda, both of which have over a century of history in Uganda, is developed along-side data derived from theological programmes within the Baptist Union of Uganda, which was only established around the time of Uganda's independence in 1962. Fieldwork in two different regions of Uganda, Busoga in the east and Kasese in the west, provides further opportunity for comparability and contrast among the adult theological education programmes of these denominations.

The voice of participants in Ugandan adult theological education, together with other ethnographic data derived primarily through observation, is given priority in the

following chapter in order to provide substantive shape to the cultural, linguistic, curricular and pedagogical elements that either enhance or inhibit the ownership of knowledge. This also enables the application and testing of the theoretical framework for this research developed in the preceding chapters of this study. The data is collected and organised using principles derived from grounded theory. Essential categories and issues are then further explored and clarified in chapter six enabling a detailed analysis of the data through critical discursive theory. Finally, both the data and its analysis demand a critical return to the essential roles played by orality, literacy and hermeneutics in the facilitation of the ownership of knowledge.

Chapter Five

RESEARCH FINDINGS: SEEKING OWNERSHIP IN THEIR OWN VOICE

“I do believe in scratching where it itches.” (BUU o.i. 25/04/01)

This thesis is an attempt to understand how theological knowledge is owned by adults who participate in theological education in Uganda. It is an attempt to address the impact of the interface between literacy and orality on the internalisation and appropriate and creative use of knowledge among such students in light of discursive critical literacy theory.

The adult learners involved in this research were those with limited formal schooling experience, normally having completed part or all of primary school, but not having completed their ‘O’ levels. As experienced lay leaders in their churches, they are pursuing foundational theological studies. This grouping of learners comprises the majority of adults currently attending theological education programmes in Uganda and represents the vast majority of church leaders in Uganda, especially in the rural areas.

In chapter four, it was noted that the key research questions that inform this study seek to understand how ownership of knowledge is perceived and evidenced by the various stakeholders in Ugandan theological education.⁸⁶ These questions are designed to give voice to learners, teachers and organisers of theological education in Uganda. They explore four essential issues which were crystallised in the theoretical background developed in chapters two and three and build upon the historical context of education in Uganda as explored in the first chapter. The first of these issues concerns the socio-political role of theological education and its juxtaposition to the formal education system of Uganda. Secondly, the interface of literacy and

⁸⁶ These research questions are detailed in chapter four.

orality in theological institutions and in local literacies, and the influence of indigenous knowledge and indigenous education patterns critically inform the process and hermeneutics of owning knowledge. Thirdly, the issue of the language of instruction is pursued with particular attention given to its impact upon learning, comprehension and the manipulation of knowledge. Finally, this research seeks to expose the discourse practices which characterise theological education in Uganda and to develop an understanding of their origin and influence upon learning. These four issues are dynamically interdependent and interactive, creating a complex educational tapestry.

As previously noted, the findings of this research will be reported and analysed in two chapters. The priority of this chapter will be to provide space for the voice of the participants to be heard. The researcher's comments will be brief in order to avoid prejudicing the voice. Where appropriate, these comments will attempt to relate the voice heard to the theoretical background already developed. This chapter will be problem-posing, as those who are seldom heard are enabled to raise the issues which they feel are essential to facilitate their ownership of knowledge.

The following chapter, chapter six, will then purposively expose the findings and the voice as developed in chapter five to analysis in light of critical literacy theory and discourse theory. As noted in the last chapter, relating the findings to the broader theoretical context is essential in order to avoid simply offering one more account, but to contribute instead to the development of theory and to the potential for agency and transformation through education research.

The methods used to answer the research questions of this study, as reviewed in the previous chapter, were primarily qualitative. A multi-dimensional research paradigm was adopted, which was based on the principles of grounded theory and bridged with critical literacy theory. This study is comparative in nature as it includes three different denominations in two diverse locations. As previously mentioned, the denominations included in this study are the BUU, the COU or Anglican Church and the RCC. Five schools were a part of this research; one Catholic, two Anglican and

two Baptist.⁸⁷ The Catholic school trained catechists, the COU schools were for lay readers and the Baptist schools were primarily for pastors. The two locations in the study represent two ethnic groups, the Basoga in eastern Uganda and the Bakonjo in western Uganda.

Field research was carried out between October, 2000 and July, 2001. This involved the collection of data through semi-structured and in-depth interviews with church leaders, theological teachers, adult students, graduates and missionaries. Forty-four interviews were conducted; many of them involving repeat visits which facilitated pursuing important issues at greater depth. Four groups of students in three different schools worked through PRA exercises⁸⁸ in which they portrayed and discussed their theological training and development through co-operative mapping. Six focus groups were held.⁸⁹ Participants in each group were homogeneous in their social and occupational standing in order to create an atmosphere which facilitated the free expression of thoughts and ideas. Classroom observation was carried out at all five of the schools. Tracking of theological discourses, oral and literacy-based interaction and teaching styles was enabled by the use of time sampling. A simple survey was also used primarily to collect background information from students. Usage of literacy skills and the important problem of which language should be used in adult theological education were also addressed by this survey. Finally, life histories of the founder of the Baptist Churches in Uganda and of the Anglican Diocesan Education Secretary in Busoga were conducted in order to add further depth to the other interview data.

This chapter will therefore be in five parts. After an introductory overview, it progresses from preliminary data to increasingly richer forms of data. Although

⁸⁷ The term 'school' will be used interchangeably with 'college', 'institution', and sometimes 'seminary' in order to improve readability. As used here, it is not meant to represent the level of education provided, but rather to emphasise the formal setting of a campus, classrooms, and a formalised curriculum.

⁸⁸ A total of twenty-three students participated in these PRA sessions.

⁸⁹ These groups involved eighteen students, seven missionaries and six Ugandan instructors.

analysis will be minimal, as already mentioned, in order to provide space for voice, the increasing richness of the data will naturally enable emergent theory to develop. First will be a brief overview of the research context, which includes an overview of the denominations involved in the research and a review of the research area, with particular attention given to its people, language, topography and the colleges where research was conducted. The second section will address the state of adult theological education in the research area as portrayed by key church leaders during initial interviews with them. The third section will highlight the results of the survey which was used among the adult theological students. The fourth part will focus on the data collected through classroom observations. This will then be followed by the main data which was derived from semi-structured and in-depth interviews, focus groups and participatory reflection action groups. The data in this fifth section will be organised around the central issues which were targeted in the key research questions and which emerged through the interview, observation and participatory processes.

THE RESEARCH CONTEXT

DENOMINATIONAL OVERVIEW

The three churches or denominations selected for this study represent three key and influential sectors of the Christian community within Uganda. Contrary to the trend in many parts of Europe today, the Christian Church is growing quickly in Uganda and plays an important and influential role in society and education as a whole. As was noted in chapter one, the RCC and COU represent the historical churches through which the Ugandan formal educational system began. These churches continue to play an important part in the educational and social fabric of Ugandan society with a majority of the population of the country belonging to these two denominations. The BUU represents the 'free' churches, which are protestant denominations that are not tied hierarchically to church leaders outside of Uganda.

These churches have experienced tremendous growth since the time of independence, becoming a critical third voice in the Christian community.⁹⁰

The selection of these three denominations was done with the intention of presenting, fairly and effectively, three representative and important approaches to theological education. The common commitment of these churches to the Biblical text and their mutual concern and demand for training church leaders with limited formal education at institutions of theology makes them appropriate for this study.

There are important distinctives between these churches which potentially influence their approach to theological education and to the use and manipulation of knowledge. Both the RCC and the COU have a strongly hierarchical structure with bishops at the diocesan level, archbishops at the national level and world-wide church leaders who reside outside of Uganda (the Pope for the RCC and the Archbishop of Canterbury for the COU). The Catholic Church maintains strict allegiance to the dogma (doctrine) and canon law of the Church, yet values philosophy and higher education.⁹¹ The Church of Uganda allows a greater degree of flexibility concerning doctrine and interpretation of Biblical texts, yet still maintains a hierarchical structure which serves as a restraint to what might be considered erroneous doctrines. The Baptists, on the other hand, are not hierarchically organised. Each congregation is believed to be directly responsible to God for their doctrine and practice. However, Baptist churches associate and work together voluntarily. The Baptist Union of Uganda is an umbrella organisation which Baptist churches may choose to join for the purposes of representation to the government and mutual encouragement and co-operation. The Baptist churches in

⁹⁰ Protestant and independent church members comprise approximately 6.4% of the population of Uganda. RCC adherents make up 41.9% of the population and COU adherents are about 39.4% of the populace (Barrett et al. 2001: 762).

⁹¹ This valuing of philosophy in the Catholic Church has the potential to provide learners with the intellectual tools necessary for the analysis of theological concepts. However, it is reserved for post-secondary education of men for the priesthood and is not evidenced in the catechetical programmes. Protestants' reticence to embrace philosophy in theological education in Africa may restrict the quality of their programmes (Mugambi 1995: 28).

Uganda maintain a very conservative view of the Bible, holding to the absolute truth and inerrancy of the scriptures.

The leaders of local congregations in each of these three denominations hold different titles and slightly different roles. Yet, all of them fit into the same category of church leaders with limited formal schooling. The RCC has both priests and catechists in the churches. The priests are ordained to the ministry after being formally trained at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Catechists are members of local congregations who help in leading services because there are not enough qualified priests to supply each congregation. These catechists lead the service, give short sermons and visit the members of the congregation, caring for their spiritual and counselling needs. However, they are not permitted to perform certain functions such as the sacraments of communion or holy matrimony.

The Church of Uganda makes similar use of lay readers in the local congregations since there are not enough ordained ministers (sometimes called priests in the COU) for each COU congregation. These lay readers lead the liturgy, present sermons and care for the congregation under the supervision of an ordained priest who often serves at the parish level, overseeing possibly twenty different congregations. The performance of significant church rites such as communion and marriage is again reserved for the ordained clergy and is not a part of the lay readers' role.

The Baptist churches are autonomous and are led by pastors. The BUU is still in the process of setting standards which will clarify minimal qualifications for pastors within member churches. At present, each congregation elects their own pastor who is then responsible to fulfil all the roles within that local congregation. Although BUU congregations work together in what are called associations (primarily at the district level), the churches remain autonomous. In some associations, these churches have chosen to set their own standards for pastors who are qualified to fulfil all the ministry roles within the church, including weddings and the ordinances of baptism and communion. Those who do not meet those standards may lead the congregations, but rely on more senior pastors to oversee the ordinances.

The catechists, lay readers and pastors involved in this study, then, all have similar education levels and responsibilities in their churches. Additionally, they have all had several years of experience in church ministry prior to going for further education. Their primary roles, in the religious context of Uganda, are very similar. They lead local congregations of believers in community worship, religious instruction and spiritual counsel. Due to the current scarcity of church leaders and economic constraints upon movement and communications, they function very independently out of necessity.

It is necessary to note one important difference in the expected outcome of theological training for these leaders. Baptist pastors are expected to be able to handle scripture and doctrine independently, without depending on denominational calendars, liturgical guides or supervision. However, catechists and lay readers do have access to these resources and are expected to use them under the guidance of other more qualified church leaders,⁹² although this supervision may be minimal, as mentioned above. This suggests that the need for Baptist pastors to be able to handle Biblical texts and knowledge effectively and appropriately with a sense of personal ownership is probably even higher than it is for lay readers and catechists. One would expect this to be evidenced in pedagogical practice within their relevant theological education programmes.

The certificates that are awarded in these colleges are recognised internally by each of the denominations but are not negotiable as credentials outside of the church. Yet, the desire for any form of education credential causes many of these theological students to view the certificates they receive as much more than simply in-house qualifications.

The purpose of their education, then, is to give them better tools and more facility to perform their duties well. The value which is added to their previous experience by this education is a greater depth of understanding and perspective of the church and

⁹² Catechists (RCC) are expected to follow church dogma and tradition the most strictly. COU lay readers may have more latitude, while still observing the church liturgy and calendar. Yet, policy and practice are not always the same.

doctrine as a whole, greater character development and a heightened professional ability to perform their ministries within the church. There is an emphasis upon training in leadership skills, such as administration, preaching and pastoral care. This is similar to other forms of vocational training in certain respects, however, the theological and people-centred nature of church ministry demands a certain depth of theoretical, doctrinal and Biblical understanding. It is a re-appropriation of 'vocation' rather than simply developing human capacity through skills training. It includes the teaching of counselling skills, the development of leadership character and instruction in Church doctrine and Bible. Biblical interpretation skills are emphasised most in the Baptist churches, moderately in the Church of Uganda and less so in the Catholic Church. This corresponds to the hierarchical structures and approaches to Biblical truth held by each of these churches respectively.

THE RESEARCH AREA

The researcher carried out the fieldwork in two different locations in Uganda: Kasese District where the Bakonjo live and Jinja and Kamuli Districts which are inhabited primarily by the Basoga. These two areas are similar in that they are both inhabited by Bantu peoples and are both in southern Uganda.⁹³ The populations of both of the research areas are primarily rural agriculturists who also keep some domesticated goats and cattle.

JINJA AND KAMULI DISTRICTS

Jinja and Kamuli are now two separate districts, but both of them were formerly a part of what was called Busoga District.⁹⁴ As they are primarily populated by the Basoga⁹⁵ and since the Church of Uganda has one diocese, the Busoga Diocese, which includes both of these districts (as well as Iganga District), they were

⁹³ Southern Uganda is historically primarily Bantu while northern Uganda is generally Nilotic.

⁹⁴ A map of the research areas in Uganda is found in appendix one.

⁹⁵ The prefix 'ba' (as previously noted) designates a grouping of people, while the prefix 'bu' is descriptive or adjectival and 'lu' refers to language.

combined for the purposes of this study. The primary language used in these districts is Lusoga. However, the historical influence of their powerful neighbours to the west, the Baganda, and the linguistic similarities between the languages of these two people groups has led to the common use of Luganda as well. In fact, the Bible most commonly used in the churches in Busoga is the Luganda Bible. The recent release of the New Testament in Lusoga has led the COU bishop in Jinja to encourage its use when the New Testament is read in worship services. The topography of these districts is characterised by gently rolling hills which are cultivated primarily by subsistence farmers.

Jinja District's pre-eminent city is also called Jinja. The municipality of Jinja is an industrial centre. It is just beginning to re-establish its industrial base after the economically devastating years of the 1970s and 1980s. The Nile River begins its long winding journey to the Mediterranean in Jinja District, as its headwaters pour out of Lake Victoria. Just skirting the town of Jinja itself, industries line the Nile's western bank while grand old houses and a golf course grace its eastern shores. The rail line which connects Kampala, and eventually Kasese, with the Mombasa coast in Kenya runs through Jinja and is a key to its industrial history. Two tarmac roads criss-cross the district; one going north to Kamuli and the other heading west to Kampala and east to Iganga and then on to Kenya.

The city serves as a central hub for church activity in the two districts as well. The diocesan offices for the Busoga Diocese of the Church of Uganda are found in Jinja. From these offices, the Church's programmes, including theological education, are directed and co-ordinated. A Catholic Philosophy Centre and the Uganda Baptist Seminary (UBS) are also located within the city. These two institutions draw students from all corners of Uganda and even across national borders in the case of the Catholic school.⁹⁶ The Uganda Baptist Seminary had thirty students in its certificate class which met the educational criteria for this research. These students

⁹⁶ The Rector of the Catholic Seminary was a valuable resource for an educator's perspective on theological training. However, the students at this seminary had qualified for university entrance and so were more highly educated than the target group for this research.

were not residential, but came to the seminary for three weeks at a time and then returned to their homes for three months. Three terms of three weeks each made up a calendar year. The faculty of the seminary consists of four full-time American missionaries and two full-time and one part-time Ugandan teachers.

Although the municipality of Jinja may appear to dominate the district, it is important to note that only 80,893 people are urban dwellers, whereas 208,583 people live in rural parts of the district (Rwabwoogo 1998: 37).⁹⁷ Most of these are primarily subsistence farmers who also produce some cash crops such as coffee, cotton and sugarcane. Commercial sugar cane production and processing takes place in the district as well.

Literacy rates reflect the rural and urban divide with 61% of the rural inhabitants being literate as compared to 83% of the urban dwellers. This yields a 67% overall literacy rate (Uganda Government 1991: 160). The district has 91 primary schools and 18 secondary schools (Rwabwoogo 1998: 40).

Kamuli District lies to the north of Jinja District and is bordered by Mukono District to the west and Tororo to the east. Lake Kyoga, through which the Nile River passes, forms the northern boundary of the district. Primarily rural and agricultural, only 8,262 out of 485,214 inhabitants live in urban centres (Rwabwoogo 1998: 56). The primary town is Kamuli, which is connected to Jinja by the only tarmac road in the district. The tarmac from Jinja ends abruptly in Kamuli slowing traffic and commerce to all other corners of the district.

Kamuli District had a 41% overall literacy rate at the time of the last census with 40% rates in the rural areas and a rate of 69% in the urban setting (Uganda Government 1991: 160). It has 205 primary schools and 27 secondary schools (Rwabwoogo 1998: 58).

⁹⁷ A new National Housing and Population Census is being conducted in 2002, but it is on-going and results are not yet available.

The headquarters for the Kamuli Archdeaconry of the COU, which was a part of this study, are located on the edge of Kamuli town. The historic church building which houses the archdeaconry offices is 99 years old. Originally built by CMS missionaries, the church complex houses two secondary schools and a primary school as well as the Rev. Canon John Maynard Webale Theological College for lay readers. As this college was established in 2000 AD in order to meet the challenges of developing trained lay readers, and upon the recommendation of the COU bishop and the Diocesan Education Secretary, it became one of the centres for this research project. The fourteen students attending the college during this study represented various parishes within the Kamuli Archdeaconry. They bicycled in to the college each Monday and returned home on Friday afternoon. This resulted in a semi-residential programme. The faculty was made up of nine different Ugandan priests and one lay teacher each of whom came in one day at a time to teach a single subject.

KASESE DISTRICT

Kasese district lies 500 kilometres to the west of Jinja and Kamuli. It is bounded by the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) on the western side, by Kabarole District to the north, Bushenyi District to the east and Lake Edward to the South. The main topographical features are the snow-capped Rwenzori Mountains which form the western border with the DRC and the western Rift Valley running dramatically along the foothills of the mountains. Within the rift lie Lake Edward and Lake George which are joined by the Kazinga Channel. Most of the land in the Rift Valley has been designated as Queen Elizabeth National Park. This means that most of the population lives along and in the foothills of the mountains.

The Bakonjo, who predominantly populate the area, have a long history which is closely tied to the mountains themselves. As Bantu, they trace their origin in one of their common traditions to Mt. Elgon in eastern Uganda (Nzita and Mbaga-Niwampa 1997: 39). As the Rwenzories form Uganda's border with the DRC, the Bakonjo can be found on both sides of the frontier. Their number is actually much greater on the Congo side, where they are known as the Banandi. Lukonzo, spoken by the Bakonjo in Uganda, is closely related to Kinandi, the Banandi dialect, and the two groups share the same Bible.

Transportation between the primary towns of Kasese, Kilembe and Bwera is by tarmac road. Due to heavy use by lorries going to and coming from Congo, the tarmac is in poor repair in many places, although repairs had begun during the time of this research. Two other important towns in the district are Katwe and Hima. The production of salt, cement and cobalt are the primary industries of the District. Despite the potential for industry and tourism, the majority of the people continue to make their living through subsistence farming. Cash crops such as cotton and coffee are also grown on a local scale. The population is predominantly rural, as in Jinja and Kamuli, with 303,709 rural inhabitants as compared to 39,892 urban dwellers. Kasese District has a 50% literacy rate with 47% of rural inhabitants being literate and 70% of urban inhabitants (Uganda Government 1991: 160). It claims 150 primary schools and 15 secondary schools (Rwabwoogo 1998: 68).

The rebel activity of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) in the district since 1996, combined with drought conditions during the growing seasons of 1999 and 2000, had hampered the agricultural development of the district at the time of this study.⁹⁸ However, with the coming of rains beginning in October 2000 and the Ugandan army's advances against the rebels during the same period, stability and plenty began to return to the district.

The three theological institutions visited by the researcher were all located within 10 kilometres of each other along the southern slopes of the Rwenzories. They were all started in 1990 and were residential schools. The Catholic St. Augustine's Catechetical Centre in Nsenyi is nestled high in the foothills and is part of a large Catholic centre comprising several schools which are located around a central church

⁹⁸ The ADF began as an Islamic military force of disaffected Ugandans who invaded Kasese District from the DRC in 1996. The original Islamic nature of the rebels dissipated within the first year, but they continued to terrorise the population through hit and run attacks which often ended in both deaths and abductions of the local people. Up to 70,000 people were forced from their homes and had to find shelter in quieter parts of the district. The last major attack to be launched by the ADF occurred during this research in March of 2001. Fifty-four vehicles were burned and ten people were killed in this attack on Kasese town. As will be noted, this happened when the researcher was doing classroom observation in RCC and COU colleges, making it difficult to continue as long as originally planned. By the end of 2001, the ADF had been reduced to a few groups of wandering 'bandits' by the Ugandan army's pursuit of them high into the Rwenzori Mountains.

building. The college had seven students in a six-month catechetical course at the time of this research. There were three faculty, all of whom were Ugandans. Just a kilometre away, is the Kisinga Divinity College, which is run by the Church of Uganda. This college had eight students enrolled in its two-year course, with one full-time and three part-time Ugandan faculty. The Western Uganda Baptist Theological College (WUBTC) is eight kilometres further down a winding dirt road which descends towards the valley. Twelve students and their wives were in attendance there for a two-year programme of study. The college has three full-time and three part-time Ugandan faculty. Visiting Ugandan and expatriate missionary lecturers are also invited to teach block courses from time to time.

THE STATE OF THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

The growth of the church in Uganda has far outstripped the provision of trained leadership for the church. Initial interviews with COU and RCC bishops, the BUU General Secretary and directors of theological education within each of these denominations, revealed a tremendous need at several levels. Quantitatively, there is a severe lack of trained leaders in the church and the great majority of those who are currently serving in leadership roles are adults who fit within the formal education target group for this study of those with some formal education but not extending beyond 'O' level or S4. Secondly, much of the theological education which is currently taking place is seen to be ineffective in producing church leaders with the ability to think theologically and relevantly. As a result, all three of these denominations noted that they were now making theological education a central priority in their strategic planning.

The paucity of trained leadership has caused tremendous burdens and responsibilities to rest on the shoulders of the few who are trained in these denominations. Clergy are stretched so far that they feel overwhelmed and disheartened. The Diocesan Education Officer for the Busoga Diocese of the COU noted that 30 out of the 222

parishes in the diocese had no ordained clergy at all (COU, Life History, 26/04/01).⁹⁹ Each of these parishes was comprised of ten or more separate churches or congregations. The Archdeacon of Kamuli noted that the archdeaconry had 269 individual churches which were organised into 25 parishes. Yet, there were only 14 priests and 17 trained lay readers in the whole archdeaconry (COU o.i. 17/05/01).¹⁰⁰

Similar numbers were to be found in the Catholic Diocese in Kasese. Bishop Egedio Nkaiganabo stated that there were only twenty-seven priests in the whole diocese and out of these 27 only 12 were Bakonjo, (RCC o.i. 04/12/00). At the only catechetical training centre in the district, the assistant director related that when they were beginning the centre twelve years ago, they had identified 132 catechists who were actively leading churches but had absolutely no training (RCC o.i. 26/03/01).

The General Secretary of the Baptist Union related similar needs. The BUU had 1018 churches related to it at the time this research took place, but most of them were managing without any trained leadership. The General Secretary stated that “*when you look at the percentage of the pastors who have gone through theological training you wouldn’t be surprised to say it’s not even beyond 5%!*”¹⁰¹ When asked how he would evaluate the current state of theological education in his denomination he said, “*I think it is pathetic*” (BUU o.i. 25/04/01). He went on to explain that graduates lack the ability to relevantly relate the knowledge they have received to their congregations and to practically administer the churches in a way that shows they have understood Biblical principles of leadership and practice. He stated that there is no effective training system in place. This results in placing unqualified and untrained people into continually higher posts of responsibility and leadership.

⁹⁹ Interview citations will begin with denominational designations (COU, RCC, BUU) when the speaker was a member of one of those churches. If the speaker was not directly representing one of these denominations, the date of the oral interview will stand alone.

¹⁰⁰ The form ‘o.i.’ will be used to refer to an oral interview.

¹⁰¹ Italics will be used for direct quotations derived from interviews. This enables differentiation between quotations from written texts and those that are from verbal interview data. Quotations are from the main interview date as recorded in appendix five.

Church leaders expressed concern that the church is not keeping up with the rest of Uganda in the area of education. Many leaders expressed their alarm that while parishioners were attaining higher and higher levels of education, their pastors or lay readers were far behind them. Interestingly, this resonates with the concern voiced by missionaries in the early part of the twentieth century as related in the first chapter. One theological educator stated that the target group for this research form the core of pastoral ministry in Uganda, but they are far behind their “*secular*” counterparts (BUU o.i. 10/07/01). These pastors end up with highly trained parishioners who ask questions that the pastors cannot answer. This can lead to disillusionment with the church as a whole and the parishioners may then stop attending.

The need for theological education is not limited solely to pushing more people through school, however. The training which is already taking place is often seen by key Ugandan educators to be inappropriate and therefore ineffective. There is an evident need for relevant theological thinking which relates to the practical life and concerns of Ugandans. There is an apparent rupture between the appropriation of academic theological knowledge and its relevant application “in-situ.” One bishop noted that among the few trained clergy he has to work with, many of them come to him with academic acuity, but without knowing how to practically use what they have learned (RCC o.i. 04/12/00). The Ugandan director of a theological institution in Kampala said, “*I think we adopted a model from the West, which was much more knowledge, cerebral based*” (o.i. 29/06/01).

One leading Ugandan theological educator lodged his concern that theology students do not really know what theology is all about. He stated that they are not able to manipulate theological concepts. In his words, they lack “*theological instincts*” or the ability to “*look at things theologically.*” “*Theological perspectives are missing,*” he said (o.i. 10/07/01). Another instructor said that the students “*struggle in thinking theologically ... They get what they are taught, but they don't think through it*” (BUU o.i.23/01/01).

These concerns have led all of the denominations included in this study to make the development of effective and appropriate theological education a priority. The

Baptist Union has made it one of its two top priorities of the next five years, while the Busoga Diocese of the COU has requested a consultant in Kampala to help them develop a more appropriate curriculum for the training of lay readers.

These initial interviews with denominational and theological education leaders revealed a common and urgent need for trained leadership within the church. They also exposed an apparent rift in current theological education between the appropriation of theological knowledge and the ability to use that knowledge practically and relevantly in the parish.

SURVEY RESULTS

The survey used in this study was focused upon gathering biographical data, as well as data relating to language preferences, perceived ability in the language of instruction, habits and attitudes towards literacy and perceptions of the origins and purpose of theological studies.¹⁰² It also solicited students' expectations of how they would use this knowledge after finishing their study programme. The surveys were translated from English into Kiswahili and Lukonzo for those students who were studying in those languages. The form and nature of the surveys was discussed and evaluated by a small group of Ugandans and theological educators before being distributed to the students. Adjustments were made to reflect their comments and to address themes arising out of the preliminary interviews. Seventy-one were distributed and all of them were completed in the researcher's presence and then returned to him.

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

The background and biographical data revealed that the linguistic and cultural homogeneity was much greater in the Roman Catholic and Church of Uganda colleges than in the Baptist institutions. All of the students in the RCC and COU colleges came from the district in which their college was located. However the two BUU schools drew students from throughout all of Uganda and one student had even

¹⁰² As noted earlier, a sample of the survey is found in appendix two.

come from Rwanda to study. One reason for this could be that whereas the Church of Uganda and the Catholic Church have been established in Uganda for a longer period of time, the Baptist Church is relatively new on the scene, with the first missionaries arriving in Uganda only in 1961. These two Baptist schools are the main theological training institutions for Baptists in the whole of Uganda. However, the Catholics and Anglicans have been able to establish more training institutions in different parts of the country, enabling them to focus lower level theological training on the diocesan level. Consequently, there was much greater homogeneity in the student bodies in RCC and COU schools in terms of language and culture. The diversity of students' cultures and languages in the Baptist schools had implications especially for language. Students were forced to use primarily English or Kiswahili for almost all of their communication.

The ages of students in all of the schools were between 20 and 69 years. The majority of the students were between 20 and 39 years of age. There was some concern expressed to the researcher by teachers that older students found it harder to adapt to the academic setting. However, it was also found that some of the older students who had a good grasp of the language used for instruction were able to perform very well. Most often, the greatest hurdle that prevented older students from excelling was their relatively poor ability to express themselves in and to comprehend the language used in the classroom.

Table 5.1: Age grouping of students.¹⁰³

Age	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69
COU-E	3	4	5	2	
COU-W	4	4			
RCC-W	1	3	2	1	
BUU-E	8	13	7	1	1
BUU-W	4	6	2		
Totals	20	30	16	4	1

Gender is an issue which is becoming increasingly important in the socio-political context of Uganda. There are women's representatives in the parliament and the government has promoted gender equality with considerable energy. However, the religious denominations within this study are conservative in nature and this is particularly evidenced in the context of theological education for church leaders, as revealed by the presence of only six women out of the seventy-one total students involved in the colleges in this study.¹⁰⁴ Although the Anglican community does ordain women to the ministry, it is a relatively rare event in Uganda due to both religious and traditional cultural restraints. Women are permitted to play the role of lay reader as well, but there were just three women out of eight students at the COU-W college and none at the COU-E college. Neither the Catholic nor the Baptist Churches currently ordain women to the ministry in Uganda. Women do not serve as

¹⁰³ The schools are grouped according to denomination (COU, RCC, and BUU) with either an E for east or a W for west to denote in which region of the country the school was located.

¹⁰⁴ The reader should remember that women are participants as well in some of these colleges and are included in all of the findings and critique which follow.

catechists within the Catholic Church, so there were no women in attendance at the RCC college. Both of the Baptist schools have had women as students and, during this particular research, three of the thirty students at BUU-E were women. They would not be permitted to be ordained or to be the pastor of a congregation within the BUU, but they do lead women's fellowships, lead Bible studies and train women, youth and children within the churches. It is important to note that the findings in this study which expose disjuncture between primary and secondary discourses would certainly be accentuated for these female students. They must confront both the limited roles available for them within the Church and the continuing cultural oppression of women in society as a whole.¹⁰⁵

The formal educational background data of the participants was collected in terms of years completed in primary and secondary schools and also in terms of attendance at skills-centred vocational or technical schools. Primary seven (P7) was the predominant exit point from formal schooling for these adults with thirty percent of respondents stating that their last year of schooling was P7. All of the respondents claimed to have attended at least one year of primary school and none of them had gone beyond secondary four or 'O' level. The wide range of formal schooling experience is one of the great challenges for basic theological education in Uganda.

¹⁰⁵ The researcher recognises the importance of these issues. Although gender is not a central issue in this research, it would be very valuable for future research to examine the additional challenges faced by women in the process of pursuing the ownership of knowledge in theological education.

Table 5.2: Years of formal schooling in primary and secondary school.

Year	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	S1	S2	S3	S4
COU-E					1	1	6	1		2	3
COU-W		1					4	1		2	
RCC-W			2		1			2		1	1
BUU-E						2	9	7	3	5	4
BUU-W	1			1	1	2	3	1	2	1	
Totals	1	1	2	1	3	5	22	12	5	11	8

Skill oriented training at vocational schools was not a part of the educational experience of most of the students. Only 9 students out of 71 had attended a vocational or technical school before beginning theological studies.

LANGUAGE USAGE AND PREFERENCE

Languages spoken in both the home and church were at variance with the language of preference for the education setting. The participants were asked what language they first learned as a child and what language they regularly use in their home today in order to determine the vernacular. They were also asked what language their respective churches use on Sunday. The results, seen in Table 5.3, record the number of different 'first languages', 'home languages' and 'worship languages' represented in each college.

Table 5.3: Number of languages used as a child, at home as adults and in church.

	Number of first languages	Number of languages used at home	Number of languages used at church
COU-E	3	1	2
COU-W	3	3	2
RCC-W	1	1	1
BUU-E	11	11	10
BUU-W	7	7	7

The first language learned as a child was always referred to as the language used by adults in their home except in the case of two people who had switched to using the dominant vernacular of the area in which they live when speaking at home. English was not cited as the first or home language of any of the respondents, and only one student even mentioned that English was used at all at home. One student also mentioned that he used some Kiswahili at home in addition to the vernacular.

The much larger number of languages spoken by students in the BUU schools reflects the previously mentioned fact that these are the only two theological institutions serving the BUU at this level of training. Consequently, they attract students from many different linguistic areas of Uganda. The Catholic and Anglican churches have developed catechetical and training centres in many districts of Uganda as a result of being established in the country long before independence. This means that students do not need to travel as far and may often be able to study within their own linguistic area of the country.

All of the respondents said that their churches use the dominant vernacular language of the area in which they were living. This was sometimes mixed with another

language such as in Kamuli where Lusoga and Luganda were both used due to the use of the Luganda Bible among the Basoga. Five respondents said that some English was also mixed in with the vernacular in their churches and only one respondent, who lived in Kampala, the capital, said that English was the main language used by his church on Sundays. It is interesting to note, then, that the language predominantly used for theological education is not the language used in everyday conversation or for practical ministry. As explored in chapters three and four, this has real potential for frustrating the acquisition and ownership of knowledge.

When students were asked which language they preferred to use in the study of theology, they responded strongly in favour of English.¹⁰⁶ This is particularly interesting in light of the fact that only one student said that his church used English and none of them said that English was either their first or their home language.

Table 5.4: Preferred language for theological education.

	English	Vernacular	Kiswahili	No Response
COU-E	10	3		1
COU-W	8			
RCC-W	1	5	1	
BUU-E	24	4	2	
BUU-W	9	1	2	
Totals	52	13	5	1

¹⁰⁶ Nearly half of the graduates of FAL and REFLECT literacy classes in Uganda also state that learning English is their next goal, far outstripping any other aspiration at the end of the basic literacy course (Okech et al. 2001: xviii).

It is important to note that RCC-W is the only school out of the five studied that used the vernacular for teaching. No English was used in this school.¹⁰⁷ The predominance of these students' choice of the vernacular as the preferred medium of study may reflect their experience as students in using the vernacular. BUU-W had both an English and a Kiswahili track for studies. Interestingly, all of the English track students preferred English and five out of eight Kiswahili track students chose English, while one preferred the vernacular and only two preferred Kiswahili. Uganda's historical struggle with Kiswahili, as discussed in the first chapter, is reflected here!

When the students were also asked to explain why they chose a particular language as their preference for theological studies, a wide variety of answers were given. These have been grouped into common themes which were recurrent in order to provide some clarity as to the reasoning behind the choice of one language over and against another. As can be seen in Table 5.5, the dominant explanation for choosing English was to facilitate access to a greater number of people. Respondents noted that English is understood not only throughout Uganda, but also throughout the world and having facility in it would enable them to have much greater access to many more people. The primary reason for choosing the vernacular among those who did so was because they said they simply knew it best. The reasons for choosing Kiswahili were mixed.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ When asked why the vernacular was used, the director said, "*The nature of their course is to eliminate pride, so they need to be willing to use Lukonzo, in which they can learn*" (RCC o.i. 21/03/01). This points to the issue of English as the language of status and to the value of the vernacular for actual learning.

¹⁰⁸ Some respondents offered more than one reason for choosing a particular language for instruction. All reasons given are recorded in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5: Reasons given for choosing a particular language as the preferred language for theological education.

	English	Vernacular	Kiswahili	Totals
National language	12			12
Read and write it well	6	1	1	8
Access to people	28	2	3	33
Access to literature and knowledge	5			5
Want to know it better	4			4
Further studies	2			2
More precise and has better theological vocabulary	4			4
Learned in school	2			2
Want to lift my standard	1			1
Know it best	1	9	3	13

PERCEIVED FACILITY IN USING THE LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

Respondents were asked to rate their ability to speak, read and write the language which they use for theological studies. As mentioned above, one school (BUU-W) had a dual track system where students could choose to follow the identical curriculum in either English or Kiswahili. Another school (RCC-W) was run in the vernacular. COU-E was mixed between the vernacular and English, but all notes and exams were done in English. The other two schools were totally run in the English language. In Tables 5.6 to 5.9, the lettered columns represent the following responses:

A – Very well.

B – Okay, but still learning.

C – Just enough to manage.

D – Poorly.

The responses of BUU-W are split into two parts with the first number representing the English track while the second represents the Kiswahili track.

Table 5.6: Speaking ability.

	A	B	C	D	No Response
COU-E	1	11	2		
COU-W	1	7			
RCC-W	6	1			
BUU-E	3	24	1	1	1
BUU-W	1 - 1	3 - 7			
Totals	13	53	3	1	1

Table 5.7: Reading ability.

	A	B	C	D	No Response
COU-E	1	12	1		
COU-W	3	5			
RCC-W	6	1			
BUU-E	5	20	5		
BUU-W	1 - 1	3 - 6			1
Totals	17	47	6		1

Table 5.8: Writing ability.

	A	B	C	D	No Response
COU-E		12	1		1
COU-W	2	5	1		
RCC-W	6	1			
BUU-E	5	21	3	1	
BUU-W	2 - 2	2 - 6			
Totals	17	47	5	1	1

In order to understand how respondents perceived their abilities in the English language, it is helpful to remove the responses of students studying in Kiswahili and in the vernacular from those studying in English. The results are shown in Table 5.9.

Table 5.9: Speaking, reading and writing ability of students studying in English.

	A	B	C	D	No Response
Speaking	6	45	3	1	1
Reading	10	40	6		
Writing	9	40	5	1	1

The large majority of the students studying in English felt that they could speak, read and write it “okay” but that they were still learning. Few believed that they were either very poor in English or only just able to manage in it. It will be seen that this

finding conflicts quite strongly with data collected from both teachers and students through interviews. It is possible that the students responded on the survey either to please the researcher or by comparing themselves to their fellow students. It may also be possible that this reflects their real perception of their abilities. However, in interviews, when they discuss the process of working with knowledge in English, they perceive the language as being a greater hurdle.

HABITS AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS LITERACY

The daily use of literacy skills on the part of the respondents was solicited in terms of time spent in actual reading. As the students primarily represented rural Uganda, lack of reading materials such as books, magazines and even newspapers was mentioned as a real problem. Most of them said that their primary reading material was the Bible. They were asked to estimate how much time they spent in reading each day when they are at home and not studying for school.

Table 5.10: Daily time normally spent in reading at home.

	0-30 min	30-60 min	1-2 hrs	2+ hrs	No Response
COU-E	1	9	4		
COU-W	2	2	4		
RCC-W	2	3	2		
BUU-E	12	10	5	3	
BUU-W	1	7	1	1	2
Totals	18	31	16	4	2

Most of the students spent between 30 and 60 minutes reading each day. As these students are church leaders, most of that reading was explained as relating to church work and preparation for preaching and teaching. Yet, 25% of the students spent

from 0-30 minutes a day reading. This is significant as they are often considered to be among the leaders in their villages and are commonly referred to as mwaliimu or “teacher”.

An effort was also made to understand these adults’ perceptions of the meaning of education. The respondents were asked to choose whether ‘training’, ‘schooling’ or ‘learning’ best represented what they thought was meant by the word ‘education’.¹⁰⁹ Table 5.11 gives the respondents’ results.

Table 5.11: Respondents’ perception of which word is closest to the meaning of ‘education’.

	Training	Schooling	Learning	No Response
COU-E	6	1	7	
COU-W			8	
RCC-W	2		3	2
BUU-E	4	9	16	1
BUU-W	5	4	3	
Totals	17	14	37	3

In light of the large number of students who responded that ‘learning’ most closely expresses what they understand the meaning of education to be, it is interesting to

¹⁰⁹ Respondents answering the English survey seemed to think that one of the words must carry the correct meaning and that their comprehension of English was being tested. The researcher attempted to make it clear that no single answer was the right one and that they should answer as they thought was most appropriate. However, he noticed that some students seemed to have trouble understanding the difference in meaning between these words and so they either asked others or copied what other respondents had written. Kiswahili and Lukonzo respondents evidenced no such problem.

note how they responded when asked what helps them learn the best. They were given five possible responses and were to select only one.

Table 5.12: What helps you learn best?

	Listening to Lectures	Reading Books	Discussions	Writing Essays	Practice	No Response
COU-E	1	8	1		4	
COU-W	2	4	2			
RCC-W	2	2	1		1	1
BUU-E	11	8	4		7	
BUU-W	4	1	1		6	
Totals	20	23	9		18	1

As will be seen in the next section, the greatest percentage of classroom time was spent in listening to lectures, however relatively little time was spend in reading or practice. These responses, then, do not simply reflect their classroom experience. It is interesting that not a single respondent cited writing essays as being the most helpful to them in the learning process. Gaining control over knowledge through writing, as was suggested in chapter three, was not a valued part of these adults' experiences. This is probably a reflection of the kind of writing which these students were given to do, which consisted of simply copying notes from the blackboard. Such writing does not encourage ownership, but, as will be seen, serves instead to close up knowledge. Observation in classes and interviews with instructors revealed that essay writing is rarely considered appropriate for teaching at this level in Uganda. Therefore, these students probably had minimal experience with organising their own thoughts into essays. Listening to lectures, reading books and doing

practical work represented 87% of the responses. The qualitative data which follows, however, presents a substantially different picture from these survey responses, by exposing the limited use of reading and the essential role of peer discussions and practice in learning.

ORIGINS AND PURPOSE OF THEOLOGICAL STUDIES

One contributing factor to the ownership of knowledge is the learner's perception of where the curriculum which he is studying came from. Was the plan of study which the learner is following developed locally or was it either adopted or brought in from outside of Uganda? Perceptions of where knowledge comes from may powerfully influence the learner's approach to working with that knowledge. Table 5.13 shows the responses of learners when asked, "Where do you think the course material you are studying comes from?"

Table 5.13: Perception of origins of the curriculum they are studying.

	Uganda	Missionaries	Europe or America	Other	No Response
COU-E	3	11			
COU-W	1	5	2		
RCC-W		3	1	2	1
BUU-E		18	12		
BUU-W	2	8		2	
Totals	6	45	15	4	1

The overwhelming perception was that the origins of the curricula used were foreign with 85.7% of those who responded saying that the curriculum which they were using was brought by missionaries or came from either Europe or America. This was all the more interesting since only the BUU schools had any missionary involvement

in them. The other schools not only did not have missionaries involved in administration and teaching, but they had never had missionaries directly involved.

Perceptions of what it means to manipulate or use theology were probed by asking respondents to write in one sentence what they think it means to “do theology”. Ownership concerns the internalisation and the manipulation of knowledge. Probing the concept of “doing theology” can be helpful in ascertaining the learners’ conceptualisations of not only what it means to get theological knowledge, but also what should be done with that knowledge. The respondents’ answers were each phrased differently and some respondents offered multiple meanings. They have been grouped in Table 5.14 into common conceptual themes. Some students responded solely in terms of obtaining knowledge, usually about God or doctrines. These were grouped together under the term “knowledge acquisition”. Others answered in terms of church-related actions which they would perform. These included such activities as preaching, teaching and training others, and were grouped together under the term, “pastoral activities”. Another set of respondents said that doing theology was concerned with their spiritual relationship with God. Finally, a fourth group focused their answers on the ability to interpret and apply the Bible to everyday life and issues correctly. These were grouped under “Biblical interpretation and application”.

Table 5.14: What does it mean to “do theology”?

	Totals
Knowledge Acquisition	44
Pastoral Activities	14
Relationship with God	7
Biblical interpretation and application	4
No Response	4

The majority of respondents perceived of “doing theology” primarily in terms of simple knowledge acquisition. The second largest group understood it in terms of enabling them to fulfil their professional responsibilities in the church through skills development. Seven respondents saw it as affecting or transforming their daily life and behaviour through their relationship to God. The smallest group, consisting of only four, understood “doing theology” to relate to being able to work with and manipulate theological knowledge relevantly and appropriately. One of the respondents in this group wrote, “To develop the word of God to those who don’t know it” (BUU-W, 21/03/01). For most of the students, content appears to dominate context and application. Such a strong emphasis on knowledge acquisition is interesting in light of the following table which reveals the important vocational objectives of the learners.

EXPECTATIONS FOR USE OF KNOWLEDGE

Adult learners who participated in the survey were asked, “What do you plan to do after you finish this programme of study?” The purpose was not to determine what caused them to enrol in the study programme in the first place, but rather to understand what they envision themselves doing after completion of their studies. This shifts the focus from the students’ original motivation to enrol in studies to the expectation of how the knowledge gained in the current study programme would be used. As this was an open question, respondents were able to respond in any way they desired. Some respondents had more than one answer. The responses were then grouped into three common categories for analysis. These categories were not predetermined, but emerged from the survey responses themselves. The majority of the responses revealed a clear expectation that the learners would be involved in church leadership roles such as teaching, preaching and pastoral care. A second group was made up of those who planned to go on for further studies, while a third consisted of those who planned to train other church leaders after they had finished their own training.

Table 5.15: Plans for after completion of studies.

	Church Leadership Roles	Further Studies	Train Church Leaders	No Response
COU-E	14	1		
COU-W	1	8		
RCC-W	6			1
BUU-E	29	3	2	
BUU-W	11	2		
Totals	61	14	2	1

As is evident from this table, the primary expectation of the adults participating in theological education in this sample was to return to their churches in active leadership roles. The education they were pursuing had direct vocational objectives.¹¹⁰

The survey showed that whereas the Catholic and Anglican theological institutions which were a part of this study drew their students from within the districts where the institution was located, the Baptist schools drew students from a much wider area. This resulted in more linguistic and cultural homogeneity in the RCC and COU schools and more diversity in the BUU related schools. The survey also highlighted the learners' great desire to study theology in English and noted that the main reason for this was the increased access to people which English was perceived to facilitate.

¹¹⁰ Adult education programmes, in Africa, that bring together learners who share a common purpose and those that focus on livelihoods, rather than simply focusing on education in general, seem to be better at designing and delivering effective literacy education than others (Oxenham et al. 2002: 3). Theological education that is vocationally centred, then, potentially meets both of these criteria and should be poised for effectiveness.

Most students who were studying in English felt that their ability to speak, read and write English was sufficient to enable them to fulfil their studies. Daily reading was limited by lack of materials, but the majority of the students still said they spent more than 30 minutes a day in reading. The respondents believed that reading books, listening to lectures and practice helped them to learn the most, while no one stated that writing essays was helpful. Curricula were understood to have originated outside of Uganda or to have been brought by missionaries. The majority of respondents perceived of “doing theology” primarily in terms of simple knowledge acquisition. Finally, most of the adult learners planned to return to fill church leadership roles upon the completion of their studies.¹¹¹

Several central issues relating to the ownership of knowledge begin to become apparent in the survey. The preference for studying theology in English is consistent with the historical account developed in chapter one and resonates with the theoretical concerns related to orality and literacy, empowerment and the linguistic aspects of discourse theory. The core relationship between knowledge transfer and knowledge ownership is raised by the predominant correspondence between “doing theology” and knowledge acquisition. When combined with the perceived external origins of the curricula, this also problematises the relative value accredited to ‘formal’ and indigenous knowledges. These issues are further clarified through classroom observation.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

Observation revealed three potential obstructions to the ownership of knowledge. These were evidenced through both oral and literacy-based activities in the classrooms. First, instructors were distanced from students and were simultaneously attributed with great authority. This restricted peer interaction between students in the classrooms. Secondly, the use of English evidently inhibited comprehension and

¹¹¹ As discussed in chapter four, care must be taken in the use of survey data in Uganda. Surveys are a new medium for these learners. They are also a literacy-based medium, which may conflict with their primary discourse in multiple ways. It is necessary, then, to examine this data in light of the other observation and orally-derived data that follows.

participation. Finally, there was a fracturing of the transfer of concepts from written texts to life's experience. These will be depicted first through the oral activities and then by the literacy-based activities in the classroom. Observation outside of the classroom will then be reviewed as a counterpoint to the formal classroom environment.

Classroom observation was carried out in all five schools included in the research.¹¹² The researcher met with all of the teachers personally before beginning observation within their class. This provided an opportunity to develop a personal rapport between the instructors and the observer. It also allowed the researcher to answer any questions or concerns they might have before the observation period began. In order to further minimise participant reactivity, as discussed in chapter four, observation in classes was repeated a minimum of three times.¹¹³ A rebel attack on the nearby town of Kasese on March 18, 2001, occurred just as classroom observation was beginning in COU-W and RCC-W colleges in March of 2001. This increased the directors and instructors' awareness of the researcher as a guest for whom they were responsible. Local codes of hospitality required that they provide both food and safety for him. Consequently, he had to curtail some visits he had planned in order to avoid creating additional stress and financial burdens upon them at a time when students and faculty alike were quite concerned for their own safety. Despite these obstacles, observation was accomplished in all of the colleges repeatedly in the same class.

¹¹² The research instrument used for classroom observation is found in appendix three, as previously noted.

¹¹³ The fewest repetitions within a class was three times which occurred at the COU college in Kamuli. More observation had been planned, but the Diocese decided to take advantage of the researcher's presence (and transport) to hold a special motivational and informational meeting for all Lay Readers in the Diocese. Additionally, the college had agreed that the researcher could observe classes on the condition that he also taught. The final two days allotted for observation were then used in teaching. Observation was repeated over five class hours in COU-W and a further five class hours in RCC-W. Nine hours of observation took place in BUU-W and sixteen hours in BUU-E with the same class. Observation was simplified in the BUU schools because the researcher was better known and was able to cater for his own needs, thus avoiding being a financial burden to the school. His presence in COU and RCC colleges meant that the colleges had to feed and care for him as expected within the Ugandan cultural context.

The objective of such observation was to determine the actual time spent in various literacy-based and orality-based modes of learning, and to discern any apparent patterns of knowledge acquisition and ownership which these activities exhibit. Such observation enables triangulation with what students and teachers reported as being most beneficial through interviews and focus groups. Orality-centred approaches were principally measured in terms of time spent in lecturing,¹¹⁴ teacher-centred discussions, and questions and answers. Importantly, peer interaction and discussion was almost non-existent in the classroom setting. Practical exercises such as preaching (homiletics) were also orally-based. Literacy-based exercises consisted primarily of copying notes and some use or analysis of texts. Particular attention was also paid to how the language used for instruction influenced what took place in the classroom.

Four of the institutions had their own buildings and met in typical classrooms arranged with a blackboard at the front and tables for two or three students each, which were set in rows. The other school met at one end of a church auditorium. A blackboard was propped up against the wall and students sat on benches that had a small desk attached to the front which was just about twelve inches wide. Only one of the schools had electricity in the classroom.

Orally-based classroom activities exposed a pattern of authoritative distancing of instructors from students, which simultaneously restricted the learners' interaction with each other, focusing all questions and student interaction upon the teacher. It also revealed the tremendous challenges which students faced using English as the language of instruction.

Pedagogical approaches that emphasised orality were very dominant in the classroom as can be readily seen in Table 5.16. Out of all the oral forms noted, lecturing by the teacher was used the most. Teachers often lectured by reading word for word from their notes and then adding other comments on the side. There appeared to be a real

¹¹⁴ Lecturing is an oral form of communication, but it must be understood that it is primarily uni-directional and is not characteristic of many other forms of orality which are more communally-centred and interactive.

concern to make sure that a certain body of knowledge was communicated. Students rarely interjected questions during the lecture. Rather they waited until the end of the lecture when the teacher would usually ask if there were any questions. Interestingly, this student hesitancy appears to convey the cultural and academic distancing of teachers from students.

Questions and answers, like class discussions, were most often characterised by authoritative teacher responses. When students addressed their questions to the teacher, even the phrasing of the questions often betrayed their expectation that the teacher would give them the right answer. This may also be an evidence of the authoritarianism of traditional society, expressed in respect of older persons, being transferred into the classroom (Jegade 1999: 127). This results in a system of knowledge that is closed, refusing to allow participants from outside the system to re-work or manipulate the knowledge in new ways (Rains 1999: 317). Ownership is precluded and knowledge is distanced from the learners. "Any proposition that is accepted solely on the grounds of an external authority is only a borrowed opinion, not knowledge" (Ellerman 2002: 7).

Discussions that took place in the classroom were primarily teacher-centred. Learners addressed their comments to the teacher rather than to one another. The teacher would then respond, often very authoritatively, and ask another student for more input. Texts were rarely referred to during discussions. The researcher never observed the use of small discussion groups in any of the classrooms. When discussion did take place, it was always in a large group (the whole class) and participation usually involved only a few students. This was more evident when the language of instruction was English, reflecting a lack of verbal confidence in English on the part of most students.

Students' verbal ability in the language of class instruction was seen most clearly when asked to give speeches before the class. Two of the schools that functioned in English required the students to practise either preaching or defending a position in front of the class. In the preaching class (BUU-E), where the students were able to prepare in advance, five out of the ten students who gave 15-minute sermons struggled even to find the vocabulary that would express what they evidently wanted

to say. The language was such an obstacle for them that they were not able to focus on the development of the skill of public speaking itself.

In another school (COU-W), the teacher wrote on the board, "Scientists have confused the world more than politicians." He then had the students each stand up and give an impromptu speech either defending or refuting the statement. These students were in the second year of a two-year programme. Four out of the seven students could not fill the five minutes, evidently lacking the words to express their thoughts. One of them sat down after three minutes because he said that although he had ideas, he could not explain them in English. After each student had taken a turn, the instructor commented, "You haven't understood the statement." He then explained to them that this sentence was a comparative statement about people. He spent several minutes helping them, then, to understand what a comparison is by comparing the physical features of different members of the class. Such poor comprehension of a simple statement, and the even greater struggle to verbalise thoughts in English, characterised most of the classroom sessions.¹¹⁵ The use of English apparently restricted the free interplay of ideas and concepts due to student frustration with self-expression.

Where classes were conducted in Kiswahili or the vernacular, however, more stories and illustrations were given by the teacher. The teaching style was free flowing and not as closely tied to the teacher's notes. Students' verbal participation was also greater. Observation, then, lends support to the concerns raised in chapters two and three concerning the role English plays in disadvantaging learners in both the acquisition and ownership of knowledge.

Exceptionally, the authoritative distancing of the instructor and the restricting influence of English were not essential characteristics of the classes led by one

¹¹⁵ It is possible that the students' hesitancy and poor ability in English was accentuated by the researcher's presence in the classroom. However, teachers and students alike confirmed the challenges posed by English through interviews, as will be seen. Additionally, observation of the students outside of the classroom as they attempted to use English with instructors or even among themselves confirmed that free expression was very limited in English.

instructor in the Nsenyi Catechetical College (RCC). This college uses the vernacular, Lukonzo, for instruction and the lecturer used what he termed the Socratic method of teaching. The dynamics of his classroom were unique.¹¹⁶ He had a well-prepared outline of the main points that he wanted to communicate. He then began by writing only the topic of discussion on the board. This was followed by a flurry of questions that were addressed to the students. He pointed to one student after another as he moved around the room soliciting responses and encouraging them to build on what others had said until they themselves came up with the point which he wanted. He would then highlight their insight and knowledge by writing the point which he had elicited from them on the board. The whole class time followed this pattern. The students were alert, involved, and all of them participated. Interestingly, this took place in the only school that used the vernacular for instruction. The students faced no linguistic barriers, enabling them to participate and express their thoughts freely and clearly. This pedagogical and linguistic shift dramatically changed classroom dynamics. Discussion remained teacher-centred; however, it was very participatory as students interacted with each other's comments, albeit by addressing the instructor.

¹¹⁶ Other instructors in the school used the vernacular, of course, but they still maintained a definite distance both authoritatively and spatially between the students and themselves.

Table 5.16: Percentages of classroom time spent in oral and literacy-based approaches.

Orality 66%	Lecture 32%	Discussion 10%	Questions and Answers 9%	Socratic Method 6%	Practical Speaking 9%
Literacy 34%	Using Texts 13%	Writing Notes 21%			

The primary literacy-based practice in the classroom was that of copying notes. Texts were used minimally in most of the colleges. All of the institutions used the Bible as a text, but only one school had any other texts which were distributed to the students. Educators said the lack of student textbooks was a result of the high cost and difficulty of obtaining English and Kiswahili books and the lack of texts in the vernacular. The one school which did provide textbooks (BUU-E) was substantially subsidised by donors outside of Uganda and all the texts were in English. The four schools which had no textbooks other than the Bible (or a prayer book in COU institutions) spent a larger percentage of time in copying extensive notes. This enabled the students to take something home which served as a record and reminder of their studies. The BUU institution that did use textbooks for each class spent a much larger percentage of time using texts and less time in taking notes. This can be seen in Table 5.17. During the limited times when texts were used, the problems of the linguistic barrier to comprehension, the Western orientation of the texts themselves and the effective transfer of concepts from texts to life experience were widely evidenced.

Table 5.17: Percentages of class time spent in using texts and writing notes.

	Using Texts	Writing Notes
BUU-E with texts	20%	13%
Schools without texts other than the Bible and/or prayer book.	3%	26%

The barrier to knowledge acquisition and ownership presented by the use of English was exposed through literacy practices in the classroom. When texts were used in BUU-E, most of the time was spent in helping the students to understand vocabulary, greatly limiting any interaction with the text. Texts were often read aloud paragraph by paragraph. One student would be asked to read a paragraph and then the instructor would ask the class which words were not understood in those sentences before going on to the next student and paragraph. Students had English dictionaries on their desks and would look up definitions. Yet, many times even the definitions of the dictionary could not be understood and the teacher would then attempt to explain the meaning in his own words. In many classes, texts were read paragraph by paragraph, by either the instructor or the students, and then were re-stated orally in order to enable comprehension.

One example of reading comprehension level occurred when an illustration in the form of a story was read aloud from the class text. As the reader finished, the class remained quiet, offering no evidence of whether they had understood the story and its significance or not. The teacher asked the class if someone could tell the meaning of the story and one student did so hesitantly. The instructor then retold the story using animated expression but without referring to the text at all. The class burst into laughter and began to discuss the story's implications. It was evident that when the story had been read from the text, it simply had not affected the students in the same way as when it was retold orally without reference to the text.

The cultural orientation of texts also inhibited the processing of knowledge. In a class on ethics (BUU-E), the teacher attempted to lead the whole class period by means of stimulating a discussion about what a Christian should or should not do when faced with 'unjust' laws. The textbook being used for the course was written by a Westerner and the illustrations were all Western. The teacher, who was also a Westerner, had asked an Ugandan teacher to come in and help him to stimulate the discussion. It was only after the Ugandan instructor interjected some African illustrations of ethical dilemmas that students seemed to comprehend the issues and some of them (still only six out of thirty) began to participate.

The problem of interpreting texts and then of transferring the concepts to everyday experience was also exemplified in the classrooms. In one class, the instructor had students read aloud paragraph by paragraph from their Bibles. Most of the students were looking at the texts, but appeared to be doing so blankly. When the instructor would pause and ask them a question related to what they had read, there was complete silence. The teacher would then answer his own question and continue to the next part of the text. This pattern continued for 49 minutes. At the end of the exercise, the teacher asked the students if they were beginning to understand how to find the main idea from a portion of text. The class sat in complete silence. The process of abstracting concepts from texts and then relating them to life appeared to be derailed. This was apparently complicated by the use of English; however, it may represent a lack of acquired learning in the academic discourse, as noted in chapter three, and of practice in working with texts as well.

As mentioned earlier, writing primarily consisted of copying notes. This was extensive in most of the schools, but particularly where students did not have textbooks (Table 5.17). Students only took notes when explicitly told to do so by the instructor. The most recurrent pattern was that the final portion of the class time would be dedicated to note taking. Notes were usually written on the blackboard by the teacher and then were copied word for word by the students. Each student had a small exercise book that was used for notes. Note taking was laborious, with lecturers complaining often that students wrote too slowly. Two lecturers who attempted to dictate notes were constantly frustrated by the difficulty that students

had in transferring spoken words to written text. It was evident that copying notes is not writing which empowers, as discussed in chapter three. Instead of writing their own thoughts creatively, the students were restricted to transferring the instructor's words to paper. Such writing serves to restrict ownership, closing up, rather than liberating knowledge.

Informal observation was carried out during the break times in between and after classes at the schools.¹¹⁷ It provided a means of comparing student activities in working with knowledge inside the classroom with their manipulation of knowledge in the informal setting outside of the classroom. These breaks were spent in informal discussions, conducted in the vernacular whenever students shared a common vernacular. Where that was not possible, these conversations took place in English or Kiswahili. In three of the schools, students went out of the school building for these breaks. They tended to assemble into groups and were heard to be discussing the content of the last class session.

These discussions were in two forms. Sometimes examples were given which extended the discourse that had begun in the class. This usually happened after classes where the students had been seen to be more participatory as noted immediately above. Other discussions were focused on clarification, with students assisting one another to fill in the gaps of what they had and had not understood during the last class session. This will be elaborated upon later in this chapter through the data generated by PRA groups. Interestingly, at the school where this kind of interaction was not seen to be taking place, students remained at their desks in the classroom during break times. Being separated from one another by desks and the atmosphere of the room itself apparently reduced spontaneous interaction. They also lived in separate accommodations in town, separating quickly after classes finished.

¹¹⁷ This took place over a period of five weeks, three of which were at the two Baptist colleges and two at the COU and RCC colleges.

Three of the institutions visited had libraries. One library was extensive with about 10,000 titles. The other two had only about 800 books each.¹¹⁸ Students rarely used any of these libraries, however. Two of the libraries were kept locked and the students had to ask permission to go in and take out a book. The other library had regular operating hours when students were not in class, but rarely were students seen to use it even when it was open. This appears to conflict with the survey responses which cited the reading of books as the best mode of learning (Table 5.12).

Observation revealed that the majority of classroom time was spent in instructor-centred oral pedagogical forms. Time spent in literacy-based activities was primarily occupied with copying notes from the blackboard. Student ownership of knowledge appeared to be frustrated by the authoritative distancing of instructors from students, which simultaneously restricted peer interaction between students in the classrooms. The use of English also inhibited comprehension and participation by learners. Finally, there was an apparent fracturing of the transfer of concepts from written texts to life as experienced by the adult learners.

THEMATIC QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW DATA

Focus groups, PRA groups, life histories, and semi-structured interviews¹¹⁹ with instructors, current students and graduates of theological education enabled those most deeply involved in the education process in Uganda to express their own perceptions and convictions concerning the place of knowledge and its manipulation and use within theological institutions.¹²⁰ The richness of their contributions to this study reflect their various ethnic, linguistic and religious backgrounds. Despite such

¹¹⁸ BUU-E had approximately 10,000 volumes while COU-W and BUU-W each had about 800 books.

¹¹⁹ As mentioned in chapter four, the framework that was used for the semi-structured interviews, life histories and focus groups is found in appendix four.

¹²⁰ As noted in chapter four, the majority of student interviews were informal. These conversations allowed the students to be more relaxed and avoided the barriers that result from the learners' perception of the researcher as an outside 'inspector' or instructor. Students were much more forthcoming in the presence of other students. This led the researcher to involve them in more focus and PRA groups where they could participate with their peers. These proved to be very valuable and enabled the voice of more students to be heard.

diversity, relevant, common themes and perspectives emerged from the valuable qualitative data which they contributed to this study. These perspectives are approached thematically, in this section, by first addressing how theological knowledge is perceived to be organised and delivered in the curriculum. Secondly, respondents' comments that contribute to an understanding of the effect of conflicting learning patterns, indigenous and formal, upon the communication and production of knowledge in theological education will be juxtaposed to one another in order to provide a sense of the breadth and depth of stakeholders' angst concerning the frustration of ownership through the clash between worlds to learning. Thirdly, the perceived impact on the transmission and manipulation of knowledge by the use of English as the language of instruction will be considered. Fourth, patterns of knowledge manipulation will be examined in light of literacy and orality. Finally, the influence of donors on perceptions of ownership will be considered.

Catalysts and inhibitors to the ownership of knowledge, derived here through the voice of stakeholders in adult theological education in Uganda, will form the framework for the critical analysis that follows in the next chapter.

CURRICULUM AND THE OWNERSHIP OF KNOWLEDGE: ORIGINS AND ORIENTATION

The curricula used in each of the five institutions studied were diverse in both origin and content. These reflected the different denominations' approaches to education and practice. The Catholic catechetical training centre used a curriculum which had been developed by Catholic missionaries who had worked in Uganda for many years. It was developed under the supervision of the Arua Diocese in north-western Uganda and the Major Seminary in Ggaba, near Kampala. It consists of a series of booklets, each of which is accompanied by posters with simple line drawings that are used to stimulate discussions about theology and practice that are considered essential for catechetical ministry. These booklets were available to faculty but not to students. The college was responsible to the diocese for its operations and development.

The two COU colleges each used older syllabi, which had been developed at older lay readers' colleges, one in Kabale and one in the Busoga Diocese. These syllabi simply listed the subjects that should be studied and the hours for each subject. A brief outline of the main themes to be addressed was included. Some suggested textbooks were mentioned, but neither school had any textbooks available for the students. These schools were answerable to Boards of Governors, which were under the oversight of the diocesan leadership through the archdeacons and the Diocesan Education Secretary.

By contrast, the Baptist institutions had each developed their own curricula. Both expatriate missionaries and Ugandan educators were involved in the development of the curriculum in BUU-W, while the missionaries primarily developed the curriculum at BUU-E. Both of the BUU schools were responsible to a local Board of Governors. BUU-W did not provide textbooks and did not suggest any particular texts for each subject, while the seminary in Jinja was the only school studied that provided the students with textbooks for each subject.

When asked where the curriculum which they were using came from, there was considerable diversity between the participants in each of these institutions regarding their understanding of the origins of their respective curricula. In the COU and RCC colleges, the dominant perception among the faculty was that the curricula had been developed within Uganda and under the authority and guidance of the Ugandan church. However, it was seen as a curriculum which was simply given to their institution to use. As the director of the COU college in Kamuli stated concerning their use of the curriculum from another COU school, we *"didn't go into the details of how they put that curriculum together"* (COU o.i. 25/05/01).

In the BUU schools, there was a clear difference in faculty perception from one school to the other. In BUU-E, the entire Ugandan faculty stated that they found the curriculum in place and that they thought it had been developed by the missionaries, while the missionaries noted that all curricular changes must be passed by the Board of Governors, which has a majority of Ugandans on it. When asked how the curriculum could be changed if necessary, the response was that the recent changes were the "brainchild" of the missionaries (BUU o.i. 23/01/01). An influential Baptist

pastor in western Uganda who also serves on the National Council of the Baptist Union noted that there have been many complaints at BUU leadership meetings that the curriculum in use at the Jinja school had come from missionaries (BUU o.i. 07/02/01).

The faculty at BUU-W had a very different perspective, however, stating that it was the church elders and they themselves who had designed the syllabus. One of the teachers who had been at the college since its inception in 1990 said,

It was the teachers who sat and discussed what would be appropriate for a pastor in a church. And they chose subjects which would help him in his ministry. That is what I would answer. Because it couldn't just come anyhow, without people sitting down. Teachers sat down and studied what should be taught in accordance with the purpose of the school. And they determined what was appropriate. And I think people agree with it. ...We sat and we looked for what was necessary for these people, relative to their level of training. ...It was we ourselves, we teachers, who set those courses (BUU o.i. 15/05/01).

Another teacher who was not present when the school began had a similar response.

I found the curriculum here, well set. But I think the curriculum here was based on the need of church leaders. I think the elders wanted, they set this curriculum basing on what was needed (BUU o.i. 07/11/00).

Concerning the development of the curricula, then, it is interesting to note that the only school where Ugandan faculty felt that expatriate missionaries had developed the curriculum was at UBS in Jinja. Significantly, this school (BUU-E) is the only one out of the five that receives external (missionary) donor support and that has expatriates in key leadership positions.

The consensus in all of the schools was that the curricula have a Western bias or orientation in terms of design and presentation. Although students and faculty alike strongly believed that the Biblical content should be maintained since, as accepted truth, it should surpass culture and context, yet the design and presentation of that Biblical truth was perceived as being foreign to the local context.

The Academic Dean at BUU-E, where the curriculum was perceived as originating from missionaries, is an American. When asked how he evaluated the

appropriateness of the curriculum, he described his own criteria for determining courses and texts.

I look for three things. I look for Biblical content. I look for Biblical integrity as per my definition of Biblical integrity. Secondly, I look for practicality. Is it just theoretical? Or is the author of the textbook, are they trying to move the student to be able to implement their material that's being presented in the textbook. The third thing I look for, sometimes I find it, sometimes I don't find it, I look for is it Africanised (o.i. 22/01/01).

He then went on to explain how he attempts to look for texts that are less Western and more African. He noted that although he preferred texts written by African authors, there was a shortage of texts written in some of the core subject areas such as systematic theology and hermeneutics. Where African authors had written texts which fulfilled his above criteria, they would be chosen “hands down” over Western authors. However, good texts authored by Africans, in his opinion, were not yet available in all subjects.

It has to do with our African colleagues writing the core curriculum textbooks that we can use in our seminaries, replacing the Western authors that we're using now. And until that's done, I don't suppose we'll ever get entirely beyond the influence the West is going to have on African theology (o.i. 22/01/01).

As the person primarily responsible for curricular development at the school, it is interesting to note his priorities. Biblical content and practicality supersede what he terms the ‘Africanization’ of the curriculum. Content pre-empts context.

The American rector of the Catholic Philosophy Centre in Jinja stated his concerns regarding the curriculum somewhat differently, emphasising bridging content with cultural context.

I do think the studies are too Western. We don't bridge Western philosophy with African philosophy and thought very well (RCC o.i. 25/01/01).

He was also concerned about the preponderance of northern faculty in the school. He tells his students that the work of making theology effectively their own and within their own culture will be theirs to do when they get out into the ministry.

CURRICULUM AND THE OWNERSHIP OF KNOWLEDGE: APPROPRIATENESS, RELEVANCE AND PRACTICALITY

The problem of origins is reflected also in the perception of the appropriateness of curricula. An educator who has worked in both Kasese District and in Jinja with both COU and BUU programmes stated that he felt that the curricula in use in these places was neither Western nor Ugandan. Yet, they tend to be more Western than Ugandan in nature, he said, and they are not appropriate for the current setting in Uganda. He said, "*I haven't seen a good solid curriculum here yet*" (o.i. 10/07/01).

Appropriateness of curricula was conceived of by Ugandans primarily in terms of their relevance to the modern situation in Africa. The knowledge content of courses was not the focus of concern so much as the choice of knowledge and the approach to knowledge. Ugandan educators expressed their concern that theological knowledge should address the issues and questions which shape Ugandan society today. Practicality was the barometer by which relevance was measured.

Reuben Musiime, a theological educator who is based in Kampala but teaches in schools and in non-formal settings in both of the research areas, characterised the current situation as a "*skewed curriculum*" (o.i. 10/07/01). The need, he says, is for a curriculum based on "*knowledge, skills, and conduct*" which are Biblical and which are relevant to the societal issues that shape Uganda today. The present approach is to present knowledge theoretically when what is needed is a curriculum based on culture. "*It should be based on theological and societal issues which we face in Uganda such as AIDS, agrarian issues, poverty, and spirits.*" Musiime noted that both the formal education sector in Uganda and theological education are producing graduates for jobs which do not exist because they have failed to address these relevant cultural and societal issues. Graduates end up looking for non-existent white-collar jobs, because they have not been prepared for the real society in which they live.

The present General Secretary of the BUU stated that there is "*a great tendency of producing intellectuals.*" To correct this, he suggests that knowledge must be practically relevant if it is to be effective in people's lives.

I do believe that right now, we need to produce people who are prepared to lead relevantly and practically. I think the practical element is lacking. Because I visit pastors. We require that pastors be able to give us reports so that we can be able to plan and be able to advise the churches appropriately. But you find a pastor who has gone through some of this training and you shamefully look at what he's doing and you say, 'There's something lacking here.' I think the practicality really is missing (BUU o.i. 25/04/01).

He continued,

And I think we need to emphasise more on practical part of training. How to deal with people who fear demons, take for example. We do believe, as Africans, we do believe that demons are everywhere. Trees, stones, rocks and you know that stuff, everything is demonic. And people are scared about anything! And how do you equip our pastors to be able to respond to such situations? Um, we also have, a history or a heritage, our African heritage. There's a way we look at things, a way we interpret things. Our type of behaviour, the way we do things, may be very different from another part of the world. So if we are going to produce effective preachers and effective leaders, we need to train them in relevant techniques that would be able to address these types of situations. I do believe in scratching where it itches. You could have a good message but, if it's not scratching anybody! You know! People are itching the other parts, for you are scratching different parts! (BUU o.i. 25/04/01)

Adult learners who stated that their theological education had been very appropriate inevitably explained that this was because it was practical. One graduate said of his experience, “...this is real practical work of pastoral work when you go down at that school” (BUU o.i. 04/12/00). Another graduate of both Baptist schools who is now a teacher at WUBTC stated that the best thing he could say about the curriculum at WUBTC is that “we teach people to understand things in the Bible and at the same time to put them into practice” (BUU o.i. 7/12/00). An instructor at the Nsenyi Catechetical College animatedly recalled the weekly practical times in churches under the supervision of another priest as the aspect of his education which taught him the most (RCC o.i. 26/03/01). These comments resonate with and extend the lessons learned from practical literacy in chapters two and three, which emphasised the importance of relating new material to the experiential and practical needs of adult learners.

The former General Secretary of the BUU and a graduate of one of the schools studied mentioned the same need. “No one sees what benefit theological education

is providing. The present system doesn't offer them avenues to be plugged into upon graduation. They need the 'how to's'. There should be some sort of internship programme where they learn these practical skills" (BUU o.i. 10/07/01). He has begun designing a proposal for basic theological education which would commit one-third of the training time to helping students think through how to use what they are learning.

Missionaries participating in a focus group emphasised the same need for knowledge to be used practically as a part of the education process (f.g. 24/02/01).¹²¹ One mentioned that when learners see how something can be used and shared with others is when, as a teacher, she saw *"the light come on."* Another said, *"I think the most fulfilling thing is to see the people you're training actually put into practice the concepts you're trying to convey."*

One element which was mentioned repeatedly in many contexts was the importance of this practice being supervised by an experienced and trained person (COU o.i. 27/03/02; RCC o.i. 26/03/01; COU, Life History, 26/04/01; BUU, Life History, 15/05/01). This resonates with the practice of apprenticeships, discussed in chapter two, as developed in Uganda and elsewhere within indigenous forms of education. The Catholic and Anglican churches were much more proactive in working the practical dimension of education into their curriculum than were the Baptist institutions. The Catholic Bishop of Kasese has instituted a year of required practical experience in the home diocese for any potential priest who completes his studies at one major seminary before moving on to his final theological training (RCC o.i. 04/12/00). This is called a spiritual practice year and the learner serves as an apprentice in the parishes under an experienced priest. The catechetical college requires service in churches on Sundays during the six-month course. The final month is then spent solely in practical work. Instructors accompany the students into the parishes and meet with them regularly to help them assess and change their practice as necessary.

¹²¹ The form 'f.g.' will be used to refer to a focus group.

The COU Kisinga Divinity College provides similar experiences for their students. At the end of the two-year lay readers' course, the students are sent into parishes and are assigned to qualified priests who oversee and evaluate their work in the churches. These priests are then asked to fill out an evaluation form, which is sent back to the college. When asked how the students learn best, the director of the college responded that it is during these times of supervised practical application of what they have learned (COU o.i. 27/03/01). The Kamuli Lay Readers' College, although just beginning, has already developed a co-operative scheme with the priests who oversee the adults who are studying. As all of them are already active lay readers in churches, the priests overseeing them are requested to send regular reports to the College concerning their application of what they are learning.

The Baptist schools have both designed their programmes to facilitate practical work, but neither of them provides any consistent form of supervision. WUBTC has no classes from Friday afternoon to Tuesday morning in order to enable students to be in local churches. However, students reported that since many of them did not understand the local vernacular, they were not able to participate significantly and so did not really get much practice (BUU f.g. 27/03/01). The seminary in Jinja (BUU-E) scheduled students to come for classes only three weeks out of every four months for the expressed purpose of enabling them to stay in their church context and to apply what they learn. However, graduates reported that they actually used very little of what they were taught. When asked why new knowledge was not applied when the students were in their churches between each term, one graduate explained that some people are "*intimidated by knowledge.*" Although they are taught new things, until they see it done in practice, it can be intimidating and so they fear to try. They just go back and do what they know. They need to be given the "*capacity to apply*" new knowledge. This can be provided by seeing it done. "*If I've not seen it tried by anybody, then I'm scared to try.*" He noted that one problem is that teachers are removed from what they teach. The students do not see them modelling in real life settings, nor do the faculty visit them in their places of ministry (BUU o.i. 10/07/01).

Interestingly, while the Catholic instructors placed primary importance on the practical use of what was learned, the faculty in the Baptist institutions placed a greater priority on communicating content. One of the Baptist expatriate instructors explained his role this way.

Part of my hope is that as content is studied at the seminary, our students will be able to make the transition of that content which admittedly is some Western, mostly Western, to an African application. But without the content, it won't make the transition. That's my involvement (o.i. 22/01/01).

The person responsible for filling the role of making sure the appropriate application is made has not been clarified in the BUU schools. This may account for the frustration expressed by some of the graduates of these institutions concerning their struggles to know how to use what they are learning.

There appears to be a consensus that the curricula of the theological colleges present knowledge with a Western bias, even though the development of those curricula is considered to be local in all but one of the schools. The appropriateness of the curricula is a major concern for Ugandan faculty and students alike. The relevance of theological knowledge to the lives of these adult learners is not sufficiently addressed or understood. Learners stated that knowledge must not only be taught in the classroom, but it must be applied to life. Learners expected the faculty to model the use of the new knowledge and to provide opportunities for students then to practise with other students, in real life settings. The Catholic and Anglican colleges provided some form of practice, although not necessarily the modelling. However, the Baptist colleges stressed the curriculum content almost exclusively, thus frustrating the students' perceived ability to use the new knowledge in their church ministry settings.

TWO WORLDS OF EDUCATION

Adults who enrol in education programmes are not necessarily becoming learners because they are entering an institution of education. Rather, they are moving into a new educational world, which functions within a new discourse. The interface between the world of learning in which they have been living and the new world of formal education that they are entering is complex and often abrupt. The question of

which approach to learning, and its consequent discourse, should be dominant usually prevails over the question of how the two may be complementary.

The practice and routines found within the formal education setting usually require a major transition for adult theological students. The context, process and skills used in the formal classroom setting represent a novel and unfamiliar approach to learning for these adults. There is a consensus among students and teachers alike that adults who have not been in a formal education setting for some time require a considerable amount of time to adjust to the classroom and school context. One year seems to be the usual amount of time required for the students to begin to really understand what is expected of them and to begin to excel to their potential in the school setting. An educator in Kasese District said,

At the beginning, it is as if things are not heard. That is true! Until he begins to get used to things. For example, when I taught the class in how to be a student this year, they were not accustomed well. They don't adjust quickly. They require a lot of explaining. They may even have a desire to listen, but there are certain places where they are just in the dark because there are new things they are receiving. ...I think understanding starts during the second term, to open up their thinking. Then at the beginning of the second year they are really ready to do something (BUU o.i. 15/05/01).

An instructor in Jinja stated,

You'll see the academic performance of students rise after the third term, the second term, the third term. Things in the first term can be kind of shaky (o.i. 22/01/01).

The school routine and the development of classroom skills such as listening to lectures, writing notes and sitting in a classroom for prolonged periods of time are patterns of formal schooling which are difficult to adjust to, especially for older students. Describing some of the elements of school routine which are hard for students to adapt to when beginning theological training, the director of the Kamuli Lay Readers' College noted the following.

They have, of course, they have to learn to be attentive. To listen. They have to learn to be fast writing. Writing very fast. They have to learn to take notes by themselves and write down important materials, or important points of discussion, or important things to note, which they have not been used to. They have to learn to stay in the class for some hours, which they have not been used to. They have to discipline themselves to waking up

early and to be involved in cleaning up and so on. That school routine, and the kind of, is what makes it a bit, some of them are a bit difficult, and especially the elderly, to adjust a bit takes long (COU o.i. 25/05/01).

Included in these routines are certain literacy skills and study skills which are new to adults coming from traditional rural life. These skills include reading for comprehension, writing notes or outlines and learning how to prepare for exams. One instructor described these adjustments by giving examples of some of the hurdles which must be overcome if students are to succeed in the new literate academic context.

Knowing how to be a student. For those who have not studied much it is hard to understand how they should study, how they should prepare, how they should do exams. They ask, 'How do I do this?' They may think certain things are unimportant when really they are important. For example, learning how to do an exam. How you should review your notes so that you can pass the exam. Things like that, he thinks, "Why are we studying this kind of thing?" It is like a blind spot. ...In other words, at the beginning, they don't understand well, but as they go along, things begin to penetrate. It is to say, to change from the way they have been at home, and the time they have been at home without studying, is difficult. And if someone has never been in school before, he has a big problem. He has a big problem. On average, there are few who understand quickly (BUU o.i. 15/05/01).

Only one school out of the five studied (BUU-W) had included a course in its curriculum on study skills in order to help these adults understand the skills which would facilitate their progress within the formal academic setting. Students who were attending that institution discussed the process of adopting new learning skills in a focus group. The following comments from second year students shed light on how they perceived the process.

"Beginning was hard, but now things build on that beginning and we are finding it easier."

"At the beginning, we thought some classes were worthless, especially that of how to be a student. I didn't see how it applied. But later, we really realised how good it was. We weren't used to studying when we came and we needed that. As an older student, I don't catch things as fast as others" (BUU f.g. 27/03/01).

Indigenous learning and knowledge are not predicated upon the same patterns and skills that facilitate success in the context of literacy-based formal schooling. The

adult learners in this study came from primarily rural contexts and had not participated in formal education for several years. When they begin their theological education in any of these institutions, they are confronted with an educational discourse which is not premised on the same criteria as their traditional ways of learning.

The seemingly abrupt and blunt collision between oral and literacy-based learning patterns was a recurring theme of both students and teachers. A graduate of one of the institutions, who is now a leader in his denomination, described the hurdle which must be faced when these two worlds meet.

At the beginning, it's always a problem. You know we don't have the reading culture here. To tell you the truth. Our learning has always been storying. It's a different experience! (BUU o.i. 25/04/01)

Characterising indigenous culture and learning in Uganda as being oral instead of literacy-based is oversimplifying the issue. Traditional society has a greater focus on the oral transmission and processing of knowledge, but this is by no means exclusively the case. Cultures are not static and the rural Ugandan culture is in transition. Yet, the struggles faced by adults as they enter classroom-centred education expose a rift which still exists between the traditional knowledge and learning systems and that which they encounter in formal theological education.

This difference between these two cultural and discursive worlds was emphasised by educators in the schools. The Diocesan Education Secretary for Busoga, COU, noted this clearly when he said, *"We are really an oral culture. We're just bridging over to a reading culture. So the students learn best orally"* (COU, Life History, 26/04/01). The director of RCC-W noted that although students wanted to read, they don't have books to read. As a result, they have developed learning patterns that revolve around discussion, consensus, and practice (RCC o.i. 21/03/01). The Principal of Jinja Seminary remarked that because many of the students at this level are not ready to *"think in a literate way"* (o.i. 05/04/01) the seminary is introducing a new approach to Bible content called 'storying'. In this approach, Bible stories are memorised and retold using drama and creative expression as a means of communicating the content and purpose of the Biblical stories themselves. New

knowledge is more easily grasped by these adults when presented in story or narrative form. Stories, parables, riddles and proverbs are common forms of teaching and learning in traditional culture. A graduate and church leader, explains how he has found this to be true.

Books are good for information. But I think the basic method would be the oral transmission of learning, so that people could be able. You know, the Africans have got a heritage of storytelling. And if you want anything you go to an old man and he will tell you stories from ever since he was born up to the present time. It's as if God has given us that ... that's what has culminated all our history. So the best way to train our people is.. let them learn books. It's a good method. But I think the best way should be, even transmitting the gospel, the best method is storytelling. And I have experienced it. When you tell a story during a preaching time, as an illustration, people will always remember your sermon. If you have something to tell, a story. They will really remember what you taught. And that will help them be able to remember the passage and what the spiritual message was all about. That's the best way to do it (BUU o.i. 25/04/01).¹²²

There is an apparent collision rather than collusion between indigenous orality and formal education's literacy approach. The two are repeatedly referenced in contrasting terms, rather than in complementary terms. Even the inclusion of storying at UBS is presented as a separate part of the curriculum, instead of being integrated into the pedagogical and curricular aspects of the curriculum that is already in place. This suggests that the dynamic interface between orality and literacy as examined in chapter two has been replaced by conflict and confrontation.

The indigenous learning patterns (and the most effective learning) of these adult students represented a very different approach to obtaining knowledge than they find in the formal theological education institutions. This was evidenced when they were asked what they remember as being most important in their theological and professional development. Current students (RCC o.i. 26/03/01), graduates (BUU o.i. 04/12/200; RCC o.i. 26/03/01), educators (RCC f.g. 26/03/01) and church leaders

¹²² A pause in speech is represented by '..'.

(BUU o.i. 25/04/01; COU, Life History, 26/04/01)¹²³ recalled a period of apprenticeship, when they had spent extensive time moving with a more experienced leader as the most powerful learning experience they had encountered.¹²⁴ This process of being mentored by a mature person involved learning by watching, practising and then reviewing what had been done.¹²⁵ Normally it took place over a period of at least a year. No formal agreement was made between the expert and the learner. Yet roles were clearly understood so that the apprentice waited until the mentor told him that he should now try to do what he had seen done. The mentor would then step back and observe the apprentice so that he could advise him on how to improve his method.

The researcher met with the first Baptist pastor in Uganda and was able to interview him many times¹²⁶ over a period of eight months in order to develop a record of his life history. Amona Bisika is now in his mid-eighties and has worked in the Baptist Church for more than fifty years. There were no formal schools where he was born and raised as a child, but he remembered how he learned from his mother and father.

¹²³ The COU Busoga Diocesan Education Secretary was very helpful and invited the researcher into his home, as well as accompanying him to Kamuli twice. These opportunities, as well as visits to his office, provided extended times for discussion and questions. The interviews (several throughout the day) of April 26, 2001 served to draw most of the aspects of his life and work together, which had been addressed during multiple visits.

¹²⁴ Informal interviews with several students also confirmed that spending time with and imitating those with more church ministry experience had been an important learning strategy that they had used before beginning theological education (informal interviews with COU, RCC and BUU students).

¹²⁵ During the years that the researcher has lived in Uganda, he has observed this as common practice. For example, two COU priests who have known the researcher for many years had both spent extensive periods of time with leaders whom they admired in order to learn from them. The same has occurred with four key pastors with the BUU in Kasese District, all of whom spent at least two years living near Amona Bisika, whose life history is a part of this study. Two of these pastors have never attended a theological college, yet they are still highly respected leaders.

¹²⁶ Five visits were made to this man's house. The shortest was for two days and one extended to five days. Much time was spent in informal discussion about his life in the evenings and then in observation of how he interacted with the many church and community leaders who came to visit him and to seek his counsel. Notes were taken regularly. A formal extended taped interview on 15/05/01 served to bring many of the observations and earlier comments into clearer focus.

I learned from my mother and father. Mother taught me how to dig and to care for goats. This took a little time. From my father I didn't learn many things. He was rarely home as he would go into the forests to cut trees and then worked as a blacksmith, but often far from where my mother and I were. During the little time I spent with him, I would watch him work. He was a blacksmith and would take metal out of rocks in order to make machetes or hoes. He also cut down the trees which were used to make charcoal for heating the rocks. So I learned his work (Bisika, Life History, 15/05/01).

He went on to explain that after he had finished his theological studies as a young adult, there were two older men who were extremely influential in his development as a leader. Time after time he would mention their names as he talked about his life. He said that he would spend anywhere from a few days to a couple of weeks at a time in their homes. These times were spent in discussing theological issues which were not clear to him and in watching their lives. Reflecting on this, he said,

I was learning other things which I still think about even today. And if someone sees that coming out, he thinks you are intelligent. But it is the intelligence of someone else (Bisika, Life History, 15/05/01).

The second aspect of his learning as a young boy was in relation to his peers, rather than to elders. He recalled how he used to go hunting for small game and birds with his friends. They learned together how to shoot birds right out of the sky. They also competed as a group with youths from neighbouring villages in these hunting schemes.

Amona is considered to be one of the leading theologians among Baptists in Uganda. Those he has trained now hold most of the leadership posts among Baptists in Kasere District. His explanation of how he worked with these men as young leaders is enlightening.

We taught them in class. We would find about one week. After class, we would sleep in the same house. We would talk and talk. Talk and talk and talk. It was two methods, in class and again in discussions. And they would bring many different questions. And sometimes we would make a plan for teaching, like homiletics. We would show them how to do it and then they would do it. And sometimes we would go to a particular church. You will lead. And you will lead songs. And you will preach, in order to see what you have learned. Like that. Yes. We also taught them one on one evangelism. How not to go up to someone and say, "Believe on Jesus. Believe on Jesus." But first you get to know what work he does and then

talk to him through the avenue of his work. If you meet someone who is planting beans, you bring verses from the Bible. Some seeds fell on good soil, some on rocks, others on thorns. And then you show him in that way. I used to teach them like that. Then it will be easy for him to understand what you are telling him. Then later you explain to him that what fell among thorns represents this, and what fell on good soil is the Word of God in a person. Then it is appropriate. I didn't want to teach them extensive things. I wanted to teach them simple things which they could understand. Yes. Yes (Bisika, Life History, 15/05/01).

Interestingly, there was a classroom dimension to this training. However, it was only one of several aspects which involved teaching, modelling, living together, discussing and supervised practice. Content was 'simple' but appropriate and used.

As already mentioned, younger leaders in all of the denominations recounted similar mentor/apprentice relationships as having been critical to their formation (COU, Life History, 26/04/01; RCC, 26/03/01; BUU o.i. 25/04/2001). These accounts rehearsed time spent in the presence of respected older mentors. This was extensive time, which included living together or in very close proximity, extended times of talking together, observation, practice and critique. A graduate stated that mentoring and informal education is important in the village and what graduates can do is more important than what they say. He noted that it is almost the inverse in the urban areas, where what one says counts a lot. He summarised his own experience with the words, "*Seeing it being done was more helpful than being told*" (BUU o.i. 10/07/01).

This model of indigenous learning through oral interaction and apprenticeship, and the current pattern of theological education in institutions, represent two different discourses or two different worlds of learning. Anthony Okech, who heads the Centre for Adult and Continuing Education at Makerere University, says, "*Because of not trying to build between the two, we have tried to create.. we have not tried, we have ended up creating two worlds of knowledge*" (o.i. 23/07/01). The peer-centred and apprentice-based learning of the indigenous or primary discourse which takes place within the life-context of these adults, is significantly different and distanced from the instructor-centred, classroom-bounded, memorisation of facts which characterises the formal theological education setting in Uganda. When these two worlds co-exist in the learner's mind with minimal interface, "collateral learning"

occurs as discussed in chapter three, thereby skirting the issues of ownership and critique.

Some attempts have been made to accommodate both worlds by having adult learners remain primarily in their home and work environment, coming to the institution only for a few weeks of intensive teaching (BUU-E). However, accommodation is not proactive utilisation of the indigenous learning world. The Catholics and Anglicans have attempted to be more proactive by programming supervised practical experience into their curricula. This is a step forward, yet it does not utilise many of the other aspects of apprenticeship and modelling in indigenous learning which are a part of the oral, communal and practical learning patterns of these adult students.

The clash of the informal or traditional learning system with that of formal education reverberates with the collision of orality with literacy. The potential of dynamic interface between the two, as reviewed in chapter two, is replaced by conflict. The process of modelling and practising found in traditional apprenticeships is replaced by formal study skills and classroom routines. The tragedy is that this clash takes place in the lives and psyches of the learners.

LANGUAGE AND THE OWNERSHIP OF KNOWLEDGE

The choice of English as the preferred language of instruction was clearly evidenced in the survey data. Interviews confirmed the desire of Ugandan adults to study in English primarily because it is seen as a language of access, first to people and secondly to knowledge. English was also considered by many students and teachers to have a more precise vocabulary, which was deemed valuable for working with knowledge. However, interview data simultaneously cited the use of English as being the single greatest obstacle to student comprehension and expression.

Theological educators concurred that the facility in English of adults with less than 'O' level formal education, or at least a few years of secondary school, is the primary obstacle which they face in teaching (BUU o.i. 07/11/00; BUU o.i. 23/01/01; COU o.i. 18/05/01). When asked if there was an evident difference in the ability of those

who had a higher level of formal education and those who didn't, one of them replied:

There is a dramatic difference! There is an obvious difference. Because the other ones who have not gone very far; they feel self-sympathy. They kind of fear themselves. They are not aggressive. They are not outward. And so you have to activate them in order for them to respond. So in that way it is so easy to identify. It is very easy. Those who have learned some length, some education higher level, respond quickly. They know what they are doing! (COU o.i. 18/05/01)

This is accentuated by the fact that the great majority of these adults come from rural areas where English is used much less than in urban centres. Poor facility in English affects the students' ability to comprehend lectures, to read, to write and to verbalise their own thoughts. This will be considered, in the following chapter, in light of critical literacy theory as reviewed in chapter three, which highlights the social construction and political discourse inherent in language.

The voices of educators and students resound with the frustrations to ownership founded in linguistics. One Ugandan teacher described the struggle they face linguistically in these terms.

English is not much. So I feel like that affects them, in fact, in their studies. Because since they are limited, they know little of English, even when they read alone sometimes they don't pick very well. Even when they are in class, they need a lot of time to be given to them to explain some things that they are learning. Somebody has to really come down, come down to the level that they can be able to pick. Otherwise, they have a big struggle, struggle there (BUU o.i. 24/03/01).

A missionary faculty member in the same school felt that the poor English ability of the students at this level affected both their ability to understand the lecturer and to understand texts. At the end of one class he lamented, "*I just can't get through to them.*" When asked how they deal with texts he said, "*They see one word that they know and hold on to that, missing the meaning of the text*" (o.i. 02/04/01).

The director of the Kisinga Divinity College expressed that his greatest frustration in teaching was the poor English ability of the students (COU o.i 27/03/01). Originally the school had used the vernacular for teaching, but then switched to English. The language of instruction was changed primarily because it was felt that any trained lay

reader should be able to use English. With the increased number of educated English speaking parishioners, facility in English was deemed necessary if the church was to be relevant and respected in modern Uganda. However, the director noted that since the change, there had been a great reduction in the number of students and that it has become much more difficult to teach the content of the curriculum. So much time is spent in defining terms that less time is available for teaching. Then even when teaching does take place, it is frustrated by the fact that students are concentrating more on understanding what is said than on thinking about what is said.

Even at the Catholic Jinja Philosophy Centre, where the students have all finished their 'A' levels and have qualified for the university, facility in English was a problem. The rector of the school said,

We're not satisfied with our students' English. As a result, we now require them to take 12 credit hours of English during two years. But as we have students from 10 different countries, and many different tribes, English is the only language they can all use. They all feel it is important to use English because so much theological literature is available in English. Many of them will continue on to higher education after finishing here and they will need English there too (RCC o.i. 25/01/01).

Students also noted the struggle they have with the English language. One graduate regretted that he had studied in the English track instead of in the Kiswahili track at WUBTC. He said that he found he could hear what was said, but could not express himself in English. He even mentioned that some of the instructors struggled with English. When students asked them questions, sometimes they could not find the necessary terms to express what they wanted to say. The result was a very simple answer that did not go into any detail (BUU o.i. 04/12/00). Another student said about his studies, *"Everything is fine except the language. We really struggle with English. Other things are okay"* (BUU o.i. 03/04/01).

When some of the students at the COU Divinity College participated in a focus group and talked about their experience in theological education, they all concurred that although they wanted to study in English, it was also English which was the most difficult aspect of school for them (COU f.g. 27/03/01). Just before meeting as a focus group, they had been required to give impromptu speeches in English. One

of the students referred to this when responding to the question, ‘What is the most difficult aspect of school for you?’

It is the English language. The exercise we just did, if it was in my mother tongue I could say so much and very easily. But it is hard to express ourselves in English. And we struggle to hear it well. We miss many things!

His answer was accompanied by the other participants nodding their heads and saying, “Yes!” When asked if it would be better if they were taught in the vernacular the students responded.

“No, we want English.”

“English is an important language. We want to learn it better.”

“We need to be able to speak in our congregations without being embarrassed” (COU f.g. 27/03/01).

Although English comprehension was understood to be a major hurdle for students, one reason many instructors asserted that English was essential was because it is perceived to be a more precise language than the vernaculars, especially in theological terminology. This was mentioned less often in the survey, but was suggested more often in interviews when participants were asked why they preferred English to their vernacular when studying theology. A graduate, who is now an instructor at UBS in Jinja, expressed this perspective well.

English is very precise. I think, I will say it's more of a scientific language because, it's well defined than the vernacular language we speak. ...Theological concepts, when they are put in an African language, they don't, they are not clear-cut. But if it is put in English, I think those concepts are clear (BUU o.i 23/01/01).

Another former student turned teacher said,

When discussing different languages, I think that the English language can help in clarifying many meanings of words. So that is one benefit. It enables one to know much. But other languages we often refer to as poor languages (BUU o.i. 15/5/01).

The English language was preferred as the language of instruction over indigenous languages by 73% of the students in their survey responses. The primary reasons given for this were that English offers access to people and knowledge and that it is

perceived to be a more technically precise language. However, the use of English was concurrently portrayed as the most difficult aspect of theological education for these adults. They mentioned that it affected their ability to understand new knowledge whether given orally or through texts. It also inhibited their ability to express their own ideas.

WORKING WITH KNOWLEDGE FOR OWNERSHIP: ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES

The formalised classroom-bounded and teacher-centred theological education in these schools emphasises memory, listening, reading and writing as the major modes of working with knowledge. This was evidenced through classroom observation and confirmed through interviews. However, interview and PRA data revealed that alongside of these forms, there is an informal process of knowledge manipulation that is taking place which focuses on discussions among peers and practice with peers. Students repeatedly stated that the way in which new knowledge was actually understood and processed by them personally was primarily through these informal processes.

The concept of working with knowledge is somewhat problematic unless it is understood within the appropriate cultural context. Whereas the Western mind usually associates a sense of autonomy with this idea, the Ugandan adults in this study prioritised communal patterns of knowledge manipulation. This created considerable friction as formal and indigenous patterns of working with knowledge were assumed by teachers and students respectively, but were not overtly expressed.

Historically, much of Uganda's education system, particularly at the primary level, emphasised the memorisation of knowledge over its manipulation. The new curriculum for primary schools is trying to help students "to develop the ability to use the problem-solving approach in various life situations" (Uganda Government 1999b: x). Still, the adult learners in this study appeared to perceive the formal education setting as being primarily focused upon the learning of new knowledge as it is given, in order to be able to respond 'correctly' when asked in an exam. The programme manager for LABE noted that it is common for adults to simply "*try to*

cram definitions.” He said that in their experience, some would even memorise that PRA, their basic method of instruction, means participatory rural appraisal! (o.i. 09/07/01). This is consistent with the evaluation of literacy and orality in chapter two, which emphasised that the imposition of a literacy-based educational approach upon a primarily oral society may encourage the simple absorption or transfer of knowledge, rather than reflection upon the text and the knowledge it conveys.

A Catholic priest in Kasese recalled his experience in working with catechists. He said that most of the catechetical teaching taking place is simple learning by rote memory. He said, “*We end up with lots up here (pointing at his head) and little down here (pointing to his heart)*” (RCC o.i. 19/03/01). An instructor at the Uganda Baptist Seminary in Jinja, who was also a graduate of Makerere University, affirmed that in his education experience in Uganda, there was a lot of learning by rote, even at the university level (BUU o.i. 23/01/01). This was asserted by the rector of the Philosophy Centre of Jinja when he said that his students, who are ‘A’ level graduates, arrive having learned to memorise above all else (RCC o.i. 25/01/01). Another lecturer explained why he felt students focused on memorisation when he said, “*They are concerned about being able to answer the questions correctly. Or being able to get, you know, the right grades*” (o.i. 29/07/01).

As was seen through classroom observation, the students spend the majority of their time in listening to lectures. Although this is oral communication, it is not normally presented in narrative form or as riddles, parables or proverbs. Instead, knowledge is transferred in a didactic fashion, almost pre-scripted and ready to be memorised. Student discussion is minimised while listening is maximised. Rather than developing a mutually enhancing interplay between content driven teaching and discussion, the former appears to exclude the latter. Although some students mentioned listening to the instructor as a way in which they learned, only two students claimed that it was one of the best ways that they learned (BUU o.i. 13/11/00; BUU o.i. 02/12/00). Still, listening to the teacher as an authority is often assumed to be the way that learning takes place in formal education. An adult educator in Kampala said,

You find that even those who have had experience, because they have come from an education system which was teacher-centred, ah, they sometimes expect.. their assumptions about learning and coming to school is that you come. You sit. You receive the information from the teacher. You write it down. Then at the end of the day you give it back to him when he gives you an exam (o.i. 29/07/01).

Reading, as a form of obtaining and working with new knowledge, faces many hurdles among this set of adult learners. Although the survey revealed that most students believed their reading ability was satisfactory and that they spent from 30 to 60 minutes a day in reading, interview responses, particularly from educators, offered a different scenario. They portray a culture which is not characterised as a reading culture, which posits authority in the words of a teacher or elder over the authority of a text, and which finds access to literature to be very limited.

A Baptist Union leader explained that adult learners face real problems when they are asked to consult a text because they do not come from a reading culture (BUU o.i. 25/04/01). This was echoed by instructors in the schools and by literacy specialists (COU f.g. 26/04/01; RCC o.i. 21/03/01). The programme manager for LABE explained that the “*reading culture is fairly low amongst us,*” referring to the urban setting in Kampala. He went on to say that this was even more the case in the rural areas (o.i. 09/07/01). The oral transmission of knowledge continues to predominate and to be seen as the preferred authority. Some of the graduates of the only school that did provide textbooks mentioned that many of the students with whom they had studied, wanted the textbooks, but only rarely actually read them (BUU o.i. 07/11/00; 07/12/00). Having the book was valued more than working through its pages.

The primary reason given for this frustration in working with texts was the lack of access to written materials, particularly in the rural areas. Although newspapers can now be found in most towns throughout Uganda, their penetration into the villages where most of the population is found is minimal. Other literature is primarily limited to local government bulletins. Books are rare and precious commodities. Even when these can be found, economic realities and priorities mean that few people are able to spend the money to buy them. Rural libraries are not available and most small towns do not even have libraries to which people could go freely. One

graduate said that although newspapers and books were available in his town, he could not afford to buy them. He would read only when he could borrow from someone (BUU o.i. 04/12/00).

Graduates and current theological students alike reported that even when they do read texts, they prefer to ask the opinion of a teacher or an elder rather than to trust a text (RCC o.i. 26/03/01; BUU o.i. 07/11/00; BUU o.i. 13/11/00; BUU o.i. 13/11/00; BUU o.i. 13/12/00). This resonates with the analysis in chapter two of how orality, when infused with literacy may experience ruptures in communication between author and audience. They felt as if texts were a one-way conversation. They wanted to be able to ask questions of the author and hear a response, but they found they could not. A graduate of WUBTC, who is also an 'O' level graduate, explained,

I would rather understand the person, say, an elder who I'm staying with says. Because some of these books, like the writer of these books, some of the situation they are taking is a bit hard to understand. I couldn't understand this one. And also, I feel like asking them but they are not near. But when this elder is here who can help me, then I need to ask him, "How? And why? Why is he saying that?" So that he points me to the point where I would like to stand (BUU o.i. 04/12/00).

The reading comprehension of adults studying at this level is another factor which inhibits effective working with knowledge through texts. Contrary to the survey results, which revealed that students think they read satisfactorily, instructors concurred that the reading level of these adults was generally low. Consequently, when texts were assigned to be read, they had to spend a lot of class time explaining terminology and what the text meant. An instructor in Jinja explained why he believed the reading comprehension level of the students was so low.

I think, it should be having several aspects. One is they are again weak. Two, they don't have time to practise reading other books, like novels or whatever. Three, their background in which they are brought up, especially their primary education. They were never taught reading novels or to read books. They were only spoon fed by the teachers. And so when they come here, that's what they expect. So, getting a book and reading it: it is difficult for him (BUU o.i. 23/01/01).

Educators explained that since Ugandan culture is not characterised by reading, adult students need to be helped to develop a desire for reading. This requires giving them

tools which will enable them to obtain meaning and value from texts. A lecturer in Kampala who works extensively in theological education in rural Uganda said,

Books are not the issue. You can have a good library and yet no one comes to read. We must help them develop a desire to read. We don't have a culture of reading (o.i. 10/07/01).

A former Baptist leader said,

Our people need to be taught to read. They need the discipline to read. In the education here, we are taught information, but are never taught to reason and articulate our own thoughts (BUU o.i. 10/07/01).

In these quotations, several important issues are expressed. First, the culture is represented as predominately orally-based, rather than literacy-based. Secondly, English comprehension, once again, is seen to be a major obstacle to learning. Additionally, there is an apparent need for developing the skill of abstracting concepts and knowledge from text and applying it to life. This resonates with the observations made in the classrooms as students struggled with texts. Finally, these quotations should at least call into question the Western assumption, as exposed in chapter two, that written text increases and improves critical reflection. It may be that in orally-based cultures, reflective thought is better stimulated in other ways.

Many of the faculty in the schools recognised the hurdles which adult students face when dealing with texts, yet there appeared to be a general sense of resignation, as if nothing could be done until the English ability of the students improved with time. Instructors explained that they just recognise that they will need to take a substantial amount of time in class defining words (COU o.i. 27/03/01; o.i. 02/04/01).

Just as reading often presented obstacles rather than opportunities for working with knowledge, so writing appeared to assist minimally with the manipulation of knowledge. As was noted in the classroom observation, minimal writing took place outside of copying notes verbatim from the blackboard. In interviews, students and teachers alike explained that these notes became their written records, their textbooks as it were, from their time in theological education. Interviews also revealed that one reason writing was slow and laborious was because it is not used extensively in the everyday life of these adults. When asked how often they write a letter or write

down something about what they have learned for someone else, the response of students was that they almost never wrote things down at home. They much preferred talking face to face with someone and would wait until they could communicate in person. Letters were written when necessary, but only to pass on brief news or information about a meeting. Church leaders did some writing when preparing to preach, but even then, it was brief and simple (BUU o.i. 04/12/00; BUU o.i. 13/11/00; BUU o.i. 23/01/01; BUU f.g. 27/03/01; COU o.i. 18/05/01; o.i. 09/07/01).

Although instructors seemed to have resigned themselves to the students' linguistic and textual difficulties, students were found to be actively pursuing alternative means of learning. Alongside the formal education and literacy-based forms of working with knowledge, a second pattern of knowledge production and manipulation, which was student led and peer-centred, was taking place. Although the teacher-centred education of the classroom did not easily accommodate discussions among peers and the oral manipulation of knowledge, discussions took place in local languages spontaneously, consistently and informally during break times and in the evenings. Group discussion among peers was consistently and almost constantly reported as being the single most helpful tool used by students to grapple with knowledge (COU f.g. 27/03/01; all PRA groups; informal interviews). This resonates with research into diverse local literacy patterns and ways of working with knowledge in oral and written texts as discussed in chapter three.

These times of discussion among students were used for both knowledge acquisition and manipulation. Because of the difficulty many experienced in understanding English, much of what took place in the classroom was not grasped. However, when they sat together afterwards, they would use the vernacular to help one another to fill in the gaps. Each student would contribute what he had heard in the classroom in order to build a composite understanding of what had been said. This process of collectively organising the knowledge that they had received during the day would then stimulate talk about circumstances in their churches or homes which might relate to that new knowledge. As they shared anecdotes, ideas and perspectives

together, they expressed that they would begin to understand the new knowledge which they had been exposed to earlier in the day.

Tellingly, this informal, communal and oral form of working with knowledge was not often appreciated by faculty. In fact, it was sometimes a source of tension between learners and instructors. During informal conversation following an interview with the acting director of WUBTC, he complained to the researcher that the students were not serious about their studies. He noted that instead of doing their homework in the evenings, they would sit around under a tree and waste hours just talking (BUU o.i. 07/11/00). Other schools (COU-W and BUU-E) were so heavily programmed with classes and required work that opportunity for sitting around and talking was minimal.

The value of these discussions was made abundantly clear through the use of PRA exercises with four different groups of students in three of the institutions. Although all of the PRA groups revealed similar oral patterns of working with knowledge, the two which represented students who did not study in the vernacular were particularly informative.¹²⁷

The students in one school sat on benches in a circle and drew with chalk on the cement floor. Another group stood around a low table on which a large blackboard was laying horizontally.¹²⁸ Both groups mapped out their learning experiences in these institutions by first drawing a map of their school campus and living areas. After finishing the maps, they discussed what took place in each area of the map. Both groups talked very extensively and animatedly about daily times when they would sit under certain trees and discuss. They listed the things they talked about and most of the subjects were related to what they had heard each day in the classroom.

¹²⁷ Interestingly, although the two PRA groups that studied in the vernacular language did refer to discussions, they did not emphasise them as much as those who studied in a second language. This was probably because they did not have as great of a linguistic struggle in comprehending the knowledge conveyed in the classroom.

¹²⁸ The maps generated by these two groups are found in appendix six.

When the researcher asked them to relate what happened in the actual education buildings as well, the students then referred to the classroom as a resource area. It was the place where they were exposed to new ideas and knowledge. However, they kept referring back to the discussions under trees with laughter, relating that the processing and understanding of knowledge seemed to take place there. Their comments revealed the value placed on informal discussion by these adults.

"You can get exhausted in the classroom, but outside you relax."

"When we sit and discuss, that is when we really understand."

"We may pick some wrong idea in the class, but get correction outside."

"There are questions you can't ask in the class, but outside we can discuss."

"We get information in the class, but it becomes real in our regular discussions about life."

"You might think this (discussing together) is a waste of time, but it's not!"
(BUU, PRA, 09/11/00; 04/04/01)

The groups were asked to prioritise where learning took place on their drawings. Both cited the place of greatest importance as the classroom, but the place where they really learn as being the discussions under the trees. At least three things seem to be recurrent here. First, there was the need for a communal process to compile and work with the new knowledge. Secondly, there was a shift in language from English in the classroom to the vernacular or another shared local language. Thirdly, there was a spatial shift from the classroom setting to the open air under a tree. These critical shifts will be pursued further in the next chapter.

Nothing was said about the libraries in either of the groups other than noting their location on the map. When towards the end of the session they were asked to comment on the library, they said the following.

"It is important because we go there to check out dictionaries to understand these hard words."

"We need some references for assignments sometimes."

"We can go and enjoy even a novel" (BUU, PRA, 04/04/01).

In a focus group conducted with students at the COU Kisinga Divinity College, students related how they used to stay together in a dorm. At night they would discuss in the vernacular what they had learned during the day. It was very helpful as many of them struggled with English and missed much of what was said in class. However, during the previous term, all but three of the students had moved into their own accommodations. They related how, as a result, they now found that they simply missed much of what is taught during the day because they are not able to discuss it with their peers at night (COU f.g. 27/03/01).

Interview data also consistently revealed the same practical value of group discussions for facilitating the comprehension and manipulation of knowledge. Additionally, it showed that these discussions often served as catalysts for the practical application of knowledge. Explaining how students learn, a priest said, “*Group discussions are their library*” (COU, Life History, 26/04/01).

Although some of the instructors in the five colleges showed¹²⁹ little appreciation for the role of informal discussion in the manipulation and ownership of knowledge, certain other educators who had a higher level of training themselves, did note the importance of student discussions. Musiime said that “*group interaction enables them (students) to really learn*” (o.i. 10/07/01 [parenthesis mine]). The rector of the Catholic Philosophy Centre stated that the most effective pedagogical approach they had found was in helping students to “*work out problems together*” and to “*find answers communally*” (RCC o.i. 25/01/01).

Okech related that his department at Makerere has been using small discussion groups more and has found that they serve to enable students to process and discover knowledge for themselves.

And the important part we emphasise to them is the discussion in their groups, so that they come up with positions on those various issues, various aspects of learning or various topics. We are using that a lot. Because we feel that it discourages the reproduction which has been so characteristic of

¹²⁹ A couple instructors mentioned the value of discussion (BUU o.i. 7/11/00; COU o.i. 18/05/01), but this was not evidenced during observation in their class sessions.

our university education unfortunately. Large lecture classes. You give a lecture. They furiously take notes. And when the examination comes, there is a lot of that reproduction. The most they do is again to refer to texts here and there, but again, just reproduction. You find that there has been very little reflection. So that's one method we have used. ...But group discussion, yeah, it helps in the sense that people reflect on what they are looking at and so on (o.i. 23/07/01).

The fact that the more highly trained educators discerned the value of discussion may suggest, as Beeby does, that the lower level of education among instructors at these colleges predisposes them to teach with an increased degree of formality, authority and distance between themselves and the learners (Beeby 1966). However, even those who did recognise the value of discussion only appeared to think of it within the context of the formal classroom. The dynamic of peer led informal, oral manipulation of knowledge in the vernacular and outside of the classroom was only expressed by students themselves. Educators may continue to be part of the problem until they become learners themselves, even learning from their own students.

Students related how knowledge which they had processed through discussions with fellow students was easily remembered. Through the PRA sessions, they told how communal activities for students in residence stimulated continued discussion and practice.¹³⁰ They would continue to work through what they were learning when they were drawing water, digging in the school fields and helping one another during times of illness. New skills were also practised communally. They enjoyed leading Bible studies together or visiting nearby churches together rather than individually. Hospital visitation was done in groups, as was evangelism in neighbouring communities. This communal aspect of knowledge application was both enjoyable and challenging. Rarely did they refer to private practice as a part of their learning process.

Literacy-based patterns of working with knowledge contained in written texts, such as abstracting concepts from texts and personal reflection upon texts presented major

¹³⁰ The benefit of learning through peers and informal discussions has been an aspect of the researcher's experience in his own education as well and may often be true in wider educational contexts, not only those that are in Africa.

linguistic, cultural and skills-centred obstacles to adult theological students. Listening to lectures, reading and writing served primarily as avenues through which knowledge could be accessed or resourced. However, the informal settings, which were appended by students themselves to the more formal educational setting of the teacher-centred classroom, facilitated the comprehension, manipulation and application of new theological knowledge by working it through the lens of their primary discursive learning patterns. The manipulation of knowledge through communal verbalisation and practice facilitated comprehension and internalisation.

DONOR INFLUENCE UPON CURRICULA AND LEARNING RESOURCES

The impact of donors on theological education in the schools studied was very evident, both positively and negatively. This research restricted the use of the term 'donor' to sources of financing that were based outside of Uganda. Donor assistance was instrumental in drawing students from the whole country in large numbers and in providing significantly improved facilities for training. However, it also created a sense of 'outside' influence and a lack of control by Ugandans. Only one of the five institutions included in this study was dependent on funding from outside donors to subsidise daily running costs and materials. Two of the other four schools had received international donor assistance for initial capital investments such as buildings,¹³¹ however, regular operating costs were funded through tuition fees, investments and church contributions. The one institution which was assisted by donor money (BUU-E) had been started by the Southern Baptist International Mission Board and was located on land that was owned by that mission rather than by the Baptist Union of Uganda.

There were several evident advantages which were a result of donor funding. The Uganda Baptist Seminary was in the process of renovating older buildings while also constructing additional new facilities. Students' transportation costs to and from the school (three times a year for three weeks at a time) was paid by the donors, enabling

¹³¹ COU-W was assisted in constructing their classrooms by assistance from a German church (COU o.i. 27/03/01) and BUU-W was assisted in building by the Conservative Baptist Mission.

many students to attend who would not have been able to under other conditions. As a result, the seminary had a much larger number of students than any of the other colleges.¹³² Tuition costs were also highly subsidised and, as previously noted, it was also the only school that was able to provide textbooks to students.

Donor assistance additionally included the supply of American missionaries as faculty. This enabled the seminary to maintain a larger number of highly qualified faculty than the other schools, but it also meant a shift in administrative control. Whereas the other schools were all administrated by Ugandans, and expatriate teachers were only rarely invited to help as guest instructors, the Jinja Seminary (BUU-E) had four full-time expatriate teachers and two full-time Ugandan teachers. The principal, academic dean and financial controller were all expatriates.

The founding mission began a programme ten years ago to “*move ownership and funding for theological education onto a shared basis*” (o.i. 22/01/01). Consequently, they began systematically reducing their contribution by 5% annually. When this research was carried out, the school was funded at a 1 to 3 ratio of local contributions from within Uganda to foreign mission contributions respectively. In order to enable the use of funds to reflect primarily Ugandan concerns, the Board of Governors had a majority Ugandan membership with a minority expatriate missionary membership.¹³³

The financial and administrative influence which the outside donors exerted over the institution did have a significant effect on the perception of the school by Ugandans. Even some of the Ugandan faculty in the school suggested that the institution did not belong to them. One faculty member stated, “*We tend to think of theological institutions as missionaries’ things which we can use sometimes*” (BUU o.i. 23/01/01). Another church leader mentioned that the very discussion about

¹³² There were 30 students in the certificate class which was a part of this study. However, over 100 students rotated through the campus in certificate, diploma, and bachelors of theology programmes.

¹³³ It would be interesting in further research to examine whether the Board actually asserts its control over the school or whether the large financial contributions and land ownership by the International Mission Board places real decision making power in the hands of the donors.

“nationalising” the school shows that “it isn’t ours” (BUU o.i. 07/02/01). These comments resonate with Namuddu’s observation that as long as the ownership of policy is monopolised by the donors, it is unlikely that the education project will elicit a sense of local ownership (Namuddu 1991: 52-53). By way of contrast, while some students in the other institutions assumed, erroneously, that most of the financing probably came from outside sources, the faculty in other schools was clearly aware that these colleges were self-reliant (COU o.i. 27/03/01; BUU o.i. 02/12/00; BUU o.i. 03/12/00; informal interviews).

The lack of control was counter-balanced, however, by the perceived need for urgently expanded theological education. Some Baptist church leaders stated that donor money is a necessity if quality education is to be achieved and that more donor money, rather than less, is currently required in order to facilitate expanding theological education to reach the many church leaders who still have no training (BUU o.i. 25/04/01; BUU o.i. 10/07/01).

When asked if theological education might look different were it not dependent on outside donor financing, the following comment from a Baptist leader tellingly reveals that outside funding and control carries with it a real cost. He exposes a reduced sense of commitment to the programme on the part of Ugandans and an increased influence or imposition of Western culture upon the students.

I think most of our people would really get to the bottom line. You see when you are investing into something and you want it to have an outcome, a result that is really effective, there’s a way you handle it. And I think our church and our training has been influenced by the Western culture. I want to tell you the truth. Our people don’t know how to differentiate between Christianity and the white man’s culture. And they copy anything! And I think some of the people who have come in to train our people have somehow imposed on them some Western culture. And that has had an effect on our people. And that’s why English is attractive. Uh, ways of putting on. Uh, living standards. You know, people want to copy what their teacher looks like. That is just natural, for everybody. And I think that has been an influence on our people. And uh, that’s why people struggle (BUU o.i. 25/04/01).

There is a recognised need for donor assistance among some church leaders in order to provide resources for quality and affordable theological education. The urgent

need for education among many rural church leaders increases the demand for funding. However, such outside funding, particularly when coupled with administrative management of institutions, degrades Ugandan control and has the potential to culturally influence the programme of study as well as the students themselves.

CONCLUSION: RECURRENT THEMES FOR ANALYSIS

The voices of the primary stakeholders in Ugandan theological education expose crucial issues and concerns which dramatically influence the ability of adult learners to own knowledge. Significantly, these themes are recurrent throughout all the different forms of data collected during the field research process, revealing a remarkable sense of reliability and trustworthiness through triangulation both between and within methods.

The recurrent themes voiced by the participants in Uganda depict three significant areas of rupture which serve as obstacles to the manipulation and ownership of knowledge by these theological students. The first of these is the evident disparity between two very different approaches to learning: formal schooling and indigenous education. These represent diverse forms of knowledge and learning patterns, embedded within divergent discourses. The necessary study skills and routines of the predominantly Western, linear and literacy-based approach to classroom-bounded education are contrasted with the oral, communal and apprenticeship patterns of indigenous education. Student-led attempts to use the learning patterns developed within their primary discourse were not understood or appreciated by most faculty.

Secondly, these findings revealed a debilitating clash between orality and literacy within the education programmes of the five colleges included in this study, which resulted in the stifling of oral learning patterns in favour of the latter. Although teachers and students alike recognised the predominance of orality within the culture, theological study simply assumed a teacher-centred and literacy-based approach. Reading texts was valued by the students, but the process of abstracting concepts from the texts and applying them to life was problematic for these learners. Critical

reflection did not appear to be stimulated by written texts, but was enabled, instead, by peer discussions outside of the classroom setting.

Finally, the problem of language was repeatedly raised as a major impediment to the comprehension, appropriation and manipulation of knowledge. Although English was preferred almost universally as the language of instruction, being seen as providing access to people and knowledge, it was simultaneously presented as potentially the greatest obstacle to students' comprehension, self-expression and learning.

These areas of rupture in working with knowledge produce tension, which creates fractures throughout the entire education process.

By ignoring the African's point of view and by insisting that pupils should adopt the European methods, whether the technique fits in with their mode of life or not, the teacher creates conflicts of ideas in the mental outlook of his pupils... (Kenyatta 1938: 126).

The following chapter will examine these ruptures in the light of critical literacy theory and discourse theory. This analysis, developed in the context of the historical and theoretical background presented in the previous chapters, will seek to work through the problems posed by this research, to expose their origins and implications. Finally, potential theoretical and pedagogical shifts will be considered that may point to a way out of an education which disrupts the ownership of knowledge and into an education which enables knowledge ownership.

Chapter Six

THE FRUSTRATION OF OWNERSHIP: RUPTURES IN DISCOURSE, LITERACY AND ORALITY, AND LANGUAGE

“The African struggle for liberation is also a struggle against psychological or mental bondage” (Martey 1993: 146).

Knowledge ownership in Ugandan adult theological education currently lacks priority status in the development of curricula and in pedagogical orientation. Programmes which promote the transfer and appropriation of ‘correct’ theological knowledge conveyed via Northern linear and formalised educational approaches (Gough and Bock 2001: 101), as was observed in the previous chapter, have resulted in the stifling of creative Ugandan thought through the exclusion of traditionally developed learning patterns from the academic setting or, at best, their relegation to the periphery of such education programmes.

The voice of stakeholders, as presented in chapter five, exposed three essential elements of theological education in Uganda which restrict the ownership of knowledge among adult Ugandan learners. This chapter will further explore and analyse these areas of rupture through the application of critical literacy theory and discourse theory. As elaborated in chapters three through five, these provide a critical approach which preserves the voice of the respondents and enables their voice to contribute to and benefit from wider adult educational theory. Such analysis contributes to the valuing of indigenous education, learning and knowledge, while avoiding the trap of essentialism (the desire to return to a pure and unadulterated ‘indigenous state’) and the “romanticization of the indigene”. There is no possibility of some magical return to an uncontaminated past (Semali and Kincheloe 1999: 18-20). The effects of economic and academic globalisation will continue to challenge indigenous peoples and their knowledges. The problems they pose, then, deserve to be heard for their own sake, and they should be valued as contributors to educational

theory for all peoples. Critical discursive literacy theory enables that process to take place.

The ruptures which inhibit the ownership of knowledge, as exposed through the voice of Ugandans themselves, include the frustration of the development of a meta-level knowledge of primary and secondary discourses through lack of opportunity to acquire the secondary (academic) discourse and the limited use of the primary discourse by learners within the institutional context. Secondly, the dynamic learning interface between literacy and orality is restricted by the preference for the dominant literacy over orality and local literacies. The result of this, as seen in the last chapter, is a debilitating clash between orality and literacy. The third crucial element which obstructs the ability to own knowledge is the use of English as the preferred language of instruction. Together, these form a powerful hegemonic structure, controlling the form and content of knowledge transfer and development.

DOING THEOLOGY: THE IRONY UNFOLDS

The phrase ‘doing theology’ inherently connotes action. This action may be mental activity, which is focused on the development of theoretical constructs or it may be more earthy, the working out of theology in the process of life lived. In the North, doing theology often conveys the picture of students or professors carefully examining ancient texts with critical and exegetical tools. The natural picture in sub-Saharan Africa is quite different. “Africans in their religious heritage express their experience of God without much theoretical exposition. They live rather than verbalize their theology” (Mugambi 1989: 9).

These very different approaches to theology highlight the paradigmatic distance between African and Northern perceptions of essential and epistemological issues. Yet, the Ugandan conceptualisation of ‘doing theology’ is not simply practical. As noted in chapters one and two, historical influences and globalisation forces have led to dissonance and friction. These are reflected in the responses to the survey question concerning what it means to ‘do theology’, when the majority of the respondents cited the acquisition of knowledge as the essential meaning of ‘doing theology’. Interestingly, the combination of outside and inside perspectives has been

distilled into the ironic result that 'doing' is no longer personal or communal action upon either knowledge or life as lived, but is reduced instead to the simple appropriation of knowledge. Using knowledge to do something, whether theoretical or practical, is substituted by allowing knowledge to act upon or simply be deposited in the individual. The 'doing' becomes 'acquiring'. Working with and using knowledge for transformation is lost. The result is a "crisis of identity" which could easily translate into a "crisis of destiny" (Mugambi 1989: 138). This may explain why, as the Cameroonian theologian, Martey, states, "doing theology in Africa can be an onerously complex task to undertake" (Martey 1993: 1).

This theological and educational dissonance rings clearly in the learners' voices. A graduate who constantly stressed the need to make education practical said, "*When I was at UBS, we didn't go back and use what we were taught*" (BUU o.i. 10/7/01). Both lived and theorised theology are absent here. The great majority of survey respondents stated that they planned to continue with their pastoral ministries after the completion of their studies, emphasising their desire to be better prepared vocationally. However, their own approach to theological knowledge, which they perceived as predetermined content to be transferred and acquired through formal education, undercuts the practical application links which must be developed. Doing theology has been trapped, becoming innocuous and emasculated, preparing adults neither to transform their own practice nor their own theory.

The paradigmatic clash between divergent conceptualisations of the meaning of 'doing theology' has ironically resulted in a 'doing' which excludes personal or communal action that uses theological knowledge transformationally. Instead, the learner is 'done to' by simply acquiring knowledge as an information transfer: rich in content, poor in context. Furthermore, this theological content is conveyed through a secondary discourse which is essentially different from the primary discourse of these adult learners, resulting in the frustration of their attempts to master even this elementary form of knowledge.

DISCOURSES AND THE FRUSTRATION OF META-LEVEL KNOWLEDGE

The adult learners in this study primarily represent rural Uganda. As was noted in chapter five, although they generally had several years of experience in church work, none of them had extensive formal education and most of them left school after completing primary seven.¹³⁴ They enter the adult education scene with strong roots in their local settings, both linguistically and culturally. Using Gee's terminology, they have developed strong identities and learning systems within their primary discourses¹³⁵ (Gee 1990). The academic institutions which they attend represent a secondary discourse, with a different set of linguistic, cultural and practical assumptions. As was discussed at length in chapter three, effective learning within a secondary discourse first requires the acquisition of that discourse. Then as learning within the secondary discourse takes place, a meta-level grasp of knowledges, drawing from both the primary and secondary discourses, provides the opportunity for meta-level discursive thought which dynamically analyses, critiques and develops knowledge in new and creative ways. However, the research in this study revealed a severe breakdown in the acquisition of the secondary discourse and a concurrent restriction of the use of the primary discourse, which resulted in the frustration of meta-level discursive knowledge and the consequent disabling of the ownership of knowledge.

The acquisition of a secondary discourse is necessary before learning can take place within that discourse. This requires exposure to models of the discourse in natural

¹³⁴ Neither of the life history subjects had done their 'O' levels, yet both were now important leaders in their denominations. The Baptist pastor had no formal schools available to him in his village as a child, but was taught to read and write by the local African church leader in a setting very similar to the 'bush' schools, as described in chapter one (BUU, Life History, 15/05/01). The Anglican priest had attended primary school, but had not completed his 'O' levels. He sat a mature entry exam in order to study for a Diploma in Theology (COU, Life History, 26/04/01).

¹³⁵ Although these primary discourses are not identical, especially in the BUU colleges which draw adults from a broad spectrum of ethnic and linguistic groups across Uganda, for the purposes of clarity and coherence, the phrase 'primary discourse' will be used to refer to those characteristics which are common to these essentially rural and traditional discourses, as noted in chapter two.

and functional settings (Gee 1990: 154). It is this natural exposure which is severely lacking for most adult learners in Uganda. In terms of both time and informal contact with the secondary discourse, the adults in this study were handicapped. This was particularly evident at the Baptist Seminary in Jinja. In the attempt to avoid alienating the adult learners from the local church congregations to which they would return, this college brings the students in for just three weeks of intensive study every three months. Although this facilitates maintaining the connection between the student and his or her congregation and traditional setting, it denies any possibility for the student to acquire the secondary academic discourse informally. Time is insufficient and the three-week segments at the college are characterised by concentrated classroom teaching.

The COU college in Kamuli is semi-residential, with the adults arriving on Monday morning and returning to their parishes on Friday afternoon. This provides consistent contact both with the institution and the home area. However, the college is located at the archdeaconry and other than time spent in the classroom, there is almost no opportunity for the students to acquire naturally the secondary discourse. Visits to the town, a district capital, could stimulate discourse acquisition, but classes run until 5:00 pm and with the town two kilometers away, the learners find it difficult to leave the college in the evening and return before dark. When they are not in class, they are together cooking, washing clothes or talking in the single large room that they share. All of these activities represent their primary discourse, rather than the secondary discourse.

The COU college in Kasese follows the regular school term of the government schools, providing extended time at the institution which one might expect to encourage discourse acquisition. However, all but three of the students had moved into the local trading centre to live with relatives. This meant that only when they were in class were they exposed to the secondary discourse. As the course lasts for two years, some acquisition is possible over time, but it comes slowly and belatedly.

The Baptist College in Kasese is a two year residential programme with a dormitory room provided for each student and his family. The college rules state that all conversation in and around the academic buildings must be in one of the two

languages of instruction, English or Kiswahili. Observation revealed that the students used both English and Kiswahili when in the residential part of campus as well, particularly when conversing across primary linguistic barriers. Indigenous languages were used, of course, in the home.¹³⁶ This setting facilitated some acquisition of the secondary discourse, but, as noted in chapter five, it only became very noticeable in terms of academic improvement at the beginning of the second year.

The one exception to this scenario was the RCC College in Kasese District. This college used the vernacular as the language of instruction, thereby avoiding one major obstacle to acquiring the secondary discourse. Secondly, the students lived in a setting very similar to that of their homes, even working in the college fields and projects just as they would at home. The academic setting was still significantly different as it entailed the taking of notes, sitting in a classroom and assessments. Yet, since all of this was conducted using the vernacular, the linguistic context facilitated acquisition and lessened the discourse divide. The use of the vernacular encouraged a more traditional and oral approach to communicating knowledge as was evidenced through story telling, student participation and group activities in the local parishes. Still, the course was only six months in duration, forcing the opportunity for acquisition of the discourse to be compressed.

Neither the colleges' programmes nor the home environments of the learners provided the necessary access which facilitates the critical acquisition of the secondary academic discourse. The compression of time and the limited informal contact of these adults with the discourse frustrated this necessary process. The resultant lack of "discourse competency" (Gough and Bock 2001: 97) fostered a functional apprenticeship to Northern ways of writing and studying in order to obtain certification. Such "utilitarian forms of discourse" reflect a Northern "process of socialisation that stresses the value of formal education and devalues non-formal learning" (Gough and Bock 2001: 101).

¹³⁶ In the context of the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the students in this study, Kiswahili is not considered an indigenous language.

In addition to the lack of facilitation of secondary discourse acquisition, research revealed that use of the primary discourse was not enabled. The strengths of the indigenous learning patterns developed within the primary discourse not only were ignored in the formal learning setting, but neither place nor time were provided so that their use could stimulate the reprocessing and ownership of new knowledge which the adults were exposed to in the academic setting.

Minimal engagement with the experiences which the adults bring with them to the formalised academic context represents a missed opportunity for the critical integration of knowledge between the discourses. Conversely, the interrogation of such experiences could enable the recovery of their strengths and weaknesses (Aronowitz and Giroux 1985: 156). Such a critical engagement of knowledge with experience would increase the relevance of the curriculum and stimulate a critical approach to learning. One Ugandan theological educator in Kampala noted the potential benefit to be gained from valuing *“the dialectic between experience and knowledge and reflecting over experience and what new knowledge, how the new knowledge casts more light on the experience you had”* (o.i. 29/06/01). However, classroom observation yielded very few examples of this form of interaction with and critique of knowledge and experience.

Considerable effort was made by the adults participating in these colleges to access their own primary discourses in order to make sense of the fragmented information they were receiving through the academic discourse. As noted in the last chapter, PRA research revealed that breaks between classes and in the evenings were used for discussing together, in the vernacular when possible, what the students thought they had heard or not heard during the classroom lectures. Together they sought to create a composite picture of what had been said and then they would discuss its relevance and validity in the context of life as they had experienced it. Kalilombe notes that this is the process needed for the construction of owned theology in Africa (Kalilombe 1999: 208). As PRA participants stated, *“When we sit and discuss, that is when we really understand”* (PRA 4/4/01). *“Class is theory, discussions make it practical”* (PRA 9/11/00). Observation in all of the schools confirmed that this informal activity was taking place under trees or on verandas during breaks from

class, except in one COU college where the students remained seated at their desks between classes, in which case almost no discussion took place.¹³⁷

Interestingly, this use of the primary discourse in informal peer discussions, although valued highly by the learners, was interpreted by some instructors as a simple waste of time that should have been spent in reading or doing homework. As mentioned in the previous chapter, one Ugandan instructor complained that the adult learners were not very serious, because they sat around in the evening for hours doing nothing but talking (BUU o.i. 07/11/00). He went on to explain that he had tried repeatedly and unsuccessfully to get them to stop squandering time and to use it better in study. The adults, in this case, strongly resisted any attempt to deny them this access to their primary discourse, although the only time available for it was when working together in their fields or late at night under a tree.

Another aspect of indigenous learning found within the primary discourse concerns the relationship between learner and instructor. Both in informal learning and in more formal apprenticeships within the traditional paradigm, the learner-instructor relationship was crucial. As revealed in the life history of Amona, both when learning in the village as a child and as an adult in theological college, it was the personal and intense contact with mentors which stimulated what he considered to be the most important learning that took place. Again, in his description of his own teaching style, he emphasised the personal relationship which he developed over time with his theological apprentices (Bisika, Life History, 15/05/01).

Yet, all of the colleges exhibited a formalised distance between the instructors and learners. This was often visually represented where instructors and learners lived distinctly separately, yet in close proximity, on campus. In both of the BUU colleges, a hedge had been planted to demarcate the instructors' housing from that of the learners. When adults were asked if they visited their instructors outside of class time, most often the answer was negative. In one PRA session, one participant said

¹³⁷ The primary discourse learning patterns appeared to be stimulated spatially, such as under a tree vs. in the classroom, as well as by the provision of time.

that he visited instructors *“only if I have a personal problem, like with money”* (PRA 4/4/01). Otherwise, the PRA participants concurred that they normally meet instructors in the classroom. In both of the COU colleges, most of the teachers lived in private housing off campus. The director of one of the colleges did live at the college, but his was a large house off to one side and the researcher did not observe students visiting him at his home. Instead, they waited for him to go to his office if they needed to approach him for any reason.

This spatially and conceptually maintained differentiation in status and relationship between instructors and learners inhibits the natural traditional learning process as characterised in chapters two and six. Apprenticeship and communication are essential elements of the primary discourse and they normally occur in the natural setting of the home as the central place from which traditional education begins (Mugambi 1989: 43-43). When such contact is essentially limited to the classroom, the primary discourse is frustrated. It is apparent that the formalised approach to theological education has resulted in the development of what Gramsci terms “traditional intellectuals” who put themselves forward as independent of the dominant social group and “become identified then by their profession and specialisation” (Gramsci 1971: 7). In this process, a rupture in the essential relationship between the instructor and the learner occurs which disables the learning patterns of the adults’ primary discourse.

The spatial and relational distance between instructors and learners also impedes the practice of traditional apprenticeships in multiple ways. Cognitive knowledge becomes disengaged from experience. The practical modelling of the outcomes of theoretical constructs in real life by experts, in this case instructors, is sacrificed. Supervised practice is substituted by the exhortation to go and practice what has been learned, often in the isolation of the learner’s home congregation. The facilitation of peer practice is neglected altogether.

Significantly, the one clear exception to this was found again in the RCC catechetical college in Kasese. As explained previously, the final month of this six-month programme was spent by learners and instructors jointly in the field. Extensive modelling of ministry had taken place during the previous five months in local

parishes. This final month was dedicated to practising together the use of the knowledge and skills which the learners had gained while instructors observed. Purposive interaction followed each practice when the adult learners sat with their instructors and peers to discuss their progress and effectiveness in using what they had learned. The powerful impact of this experience was evidenced by one graduate of the RCC college who animatedly explained that the time he really learned and enjoyed learning was during this month of practical supervised experience with peers. He said, *"When we left there, we knew what we were doing!"* (RCC o.i. 26/03/01).

In sharp contrast, a graduate of one of the classroom-centred Baptist colleges lamented the lack of practice they received. When asked what could be done to rectify the situation, he replied, *"I think the practical part of training could be reinforced with more time during training time, and close supervision from the faculties and the teachers, and follow up from the training centres and programmes"* (BUU o.i. 25/04/01).

The disengagement of information from practice and experience creates two distinct ruptures in ownership. The first, and most visible, is the rupture between cognition and application. The expanding amount of information memorised by the learners is not reflected in an equivalent expansion or redirection of practice. This problem is certainly not unique to theological education in Uganda. Instead, it reflects an inherent weakness of formal classroom-bounded education, when it isolates itself from practice and ignores building upon the experience of learners. Yet, its effects upon learning may be accentuated for these learners, for whom practice is such an integral part of learning in their primary discourse.

Secondly, and this actually precedes the other, there is the cognitive fragmentation of this information which disables its transformation into usable knowledge.

What makes information knowledge – what makes it empowering – is the way in which it can be integrated within an identity of participation. When information does not build up to an identity of participation, it remains alien, literal, fragmented, unnegotiable (Wenger 1998: 220).

The segregation of content from practice may be, in some cases, a simple oversight in curricular planning, but it may also be a reflection of what educators perceive to be the proper role of the college. A missionary educator stated, “*You can’t transition to something else (practice) until you have the content, at least the core content*” (o.i. 22/01/01 [parenthesis mine]). Content and practice are separated in a linear process which emphasises content in education and practice at home.

The integrated and practical approach to learning which characterises indigenous education, as explained in chapter two (Bray et al. 1986; Ocitti 1994; Okello 1994; Semali 1999), is here substituted by a compartmentalised approach that leaves the learners struggling to find the connection between knowledge and practice. These connections are obscure because the unbridged disjuncture between the discourses includes “epistemological oppositions” (Gough and Bock 2001: 105) which result in unconscious learner opposition to the ways of thinking about knowledge as interpreted through the secondary academic discourse. In other words, the patterns and strategies used for validating accepted knowledge and derived theory are different in various discourses. When these epistemological processes are simply assumed, without being honestly addressed and compared, unconscious resistance develops to new knowledge which violates one’s normal criteria for determining the veracity of knowledge.¹³⁸

Such resistance recognisably raises epistemological tensions, which further fracture the educational process. If the authoritative distancing of instructors is resisted, for instance, then other methods of arriving at agreed upon positions of truth are required. This necessitates honest grappling with epistemologies by instructors (Semali and Kincheloe 1999: 37), students and communities alike. Assumed epistemologies must be exposed. Exposed epistemologies must be understood. This is meta-level working with knowledge at its best. Such interdiscursivity requires the delineation, the acceptance by all parties and the rigorous application of appropriate and coherent hermeneutics of both oral and written texts.

¹³⁸ Semali refers to “Western epistemological tyranny” which decrees that only Cartesian-Newtonian ways of seeing reality are worth discussing within the academy (Semali and Kincheloe 1999: 31).

The emphasis on content which must be learned in the academic institution and then subsequently practised at home subscribes, possibly unknowingly, to a view which proposes that higher cognitive skills are most effectively developed through literacy and abstract reflection on theoretical concepts. Although such skills undoubtedly may be developed in this way, it does not follow that they may not be developed in other ways as well. Rather, cognitive processes are affected by the context of learning and higher order cognitive skills have also been shown to be developed through apprenticeship modes of learning (Dyer 2001: 325). It is possible, then, to situate knowledge and literacies within, rather than apart from local, social, cultural, historical, political and economic practices (Gee 2000: 180). When knowledge is understood contextually,

...‘networks’ are a key metaphor: knowledge and meaning are seen as emerging from social practices or activities in which people, environments, tools, technologies, objects, words, acts, and symbols are all linked to (‘networked’ with) each other and dynamically interact with and on each other (Gee 2000: 183).

The traditional networks through which knowledge emerges within the adults’ primary discourse have been alternately ignored or disabled as these colleges pursue learning within the secondary academic discourse. However, such learning is not facilitated by the necessary preliminary and continuing opportunity for acquisition of the secondary discourse, as explained through discourse theory in chapter three. The result of this contradiction is the perplexing struggle on the part of the learners to grasp whatever information they can in the attempt to complete the programme and receive certification. The cognitive knowledge that is acquired is appropriated as a transfer from the professional instructor to the learner, devoid of context and stripped of relevance through practice. The development of a meta-level knowledge of discourses which enables ownership and a critical, creative and transformative working with knowledge is forfeited in this discursively fragmented educational provision. The practical outworking of this fragmentation is clearly seen in relation to literacy and orality, and language in Ugandan theological provision.

LITERACY AND ORALITY: PREFERENCE AND RESTRICTION

Literacy's infusion into traditional orality in Uganda creates a dynamic which includes both tension and opportunity as was elaborated in chapter two. In the context of this study, this is particularly important for adult theological education where the infusion has normally been stimulated through minimal formal education and through the necessary use of literacy skills as experienced in church ministry in rural Uganda.¹³⁹ Yet, at the same time, the oral tradition has been shaped and strengthened over a longer life history of the learner. As was noted earlier, there is an "interdiscursivity" (Quayson 1997: 16) between literacy and orality which may either stimulate and enhance or obstruct the ownership of knowledge. Following Street's suggestion, in order to preserve clarity in the analysis of this interdiscursivity it will be advantageous to maintain the distinction between orality and literacy rather than to label the oral dimension as 'literacy' as well in this discussion (Street 2001: 16).

Field research exposed a preference for literacy over orality in Ugandan adult theological education, which served to restrict rather than release the dynamic learning interface between the two. This was primarily evidenced through the imposition of Northern academic literacy practice without regard for the local literacy practices of the learners.¹⁴⁰ Such local literacy practices reflect what people actually do with literacy, how they use and draw upon literacy in the narrative of their own lives (Barton and Hamilton 2000: 7-8; Bruner 1996: 149; Gee 2000: 194). These local literacy practices, as will be shown, are communally-based and often involve many people participating together in the literacy event. This imposition of an external dominant literacy resulted in a rarefication of academic literacy practice by the adult learners, signified by respect for the text more than pursuit of the knowledge within the text. An example of this was observed in Jinja. One of the

¹³⁹ Higher levels of theological study would, of course, still experience this infusion of literacy into orality, but the dynamics would be altered due to the learners' greater formal schooling experience and greater exposure to literacy-based learning.

¹⁴⁰ As mentioned earlier, adult learners themselves may collude in this process.

primary enticements to attend the Jinja Baptist Seminary is that it provides textbooks to the students through donor money. Yet, as one graduate described the value attached to receiving books he also said, *"But you see when I was at the college, other students were reluctant to study, to read books. ...when they went home, they were busy doing other things. They couldn't get time to read"* (BUU o.i. 07/11/00). Possession of the text was valued over possession of the knowledge within the text.¹⁴¹

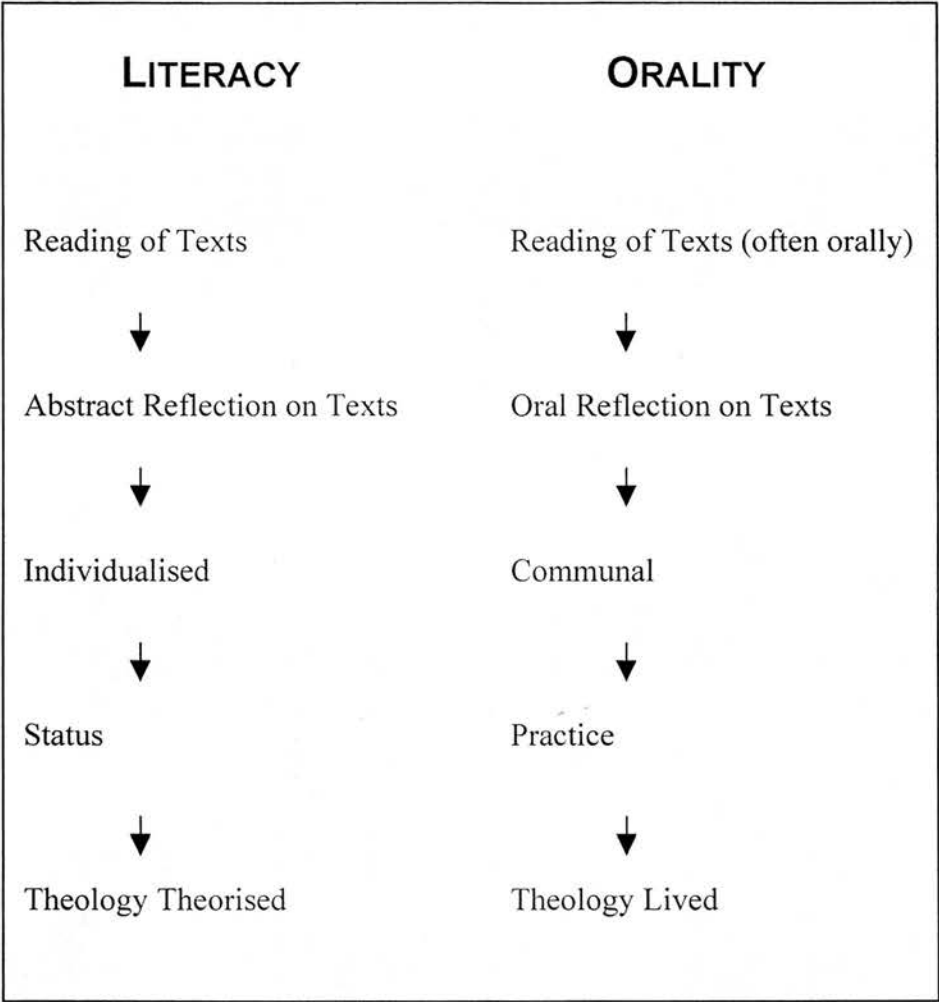
The emphasis upon education in terms of the development of literacy skills is widespread in East Africa. "Many people cannot think of an illiterate person as being educated" because of the "external innovation" which has created a "necessary connection between literacy and education" (Mugambi 1989: 104-105). This perspective was evidenced by the recurrent desire, voiced by learners, to obtain more books and to carefully copy each word that the instructor gave them as part of the notes for the day. Additionally, it was observed pedagogically as the instructors gave reading homework which was to be done individually.¹⁴² Students were expected to reflect on their reading, even if this was only their notes or the Bible, and to return with their own personal insights. The assumption, examined in chapter two, that reading texts increases one's ability to reflect critically by repeatedly stepping away from and returning to the text underlies this individualistic approach to literacy. However, it tended to derail critical analysis by forcing it into a predetermined external literacy context while ignoring the potential for critique within orality itself. This can be seen diagrammatically in figure 6.1.¹⁴³

¹⁴¹ This attitude toward texts is not necessarily unique to Uganda or to these localities. However, it derives, in this case, from the field research conducted in these two regions of Uganda. As with certain other findings in this research, similar attitudes may be recognised in other contexts as well, including Northern settings.

¹⁴² This happened almost exclusively in the BUU schools and even then, reading assignments were limited. Jinja Seminary had the greatest emphasis on reading due to the provision of texts by donors.

¹⁴³ This diagram provides clarity in understanding the basic reflective processes which characterise literacy and orality. However, the dynamic interplay between the two, as examined in chapter two, means that there is certainly movement back and forth across the spectrum between literacy and orality.

Figure 6.1 – Process in Literacy and Orality



An examination of the prevalent situated literacies of rural Ugandan adults reveals the common use of literacy in community or group events. As evidenced in chapter five, individual uses of literacy, other than the reading of signs or prices in stores, which might also be described as communal activities in the rural Ugandan context, are relatively restricted to the infrequent receipt of a personal note or communication and to the periodic personal reading of scripture. Even Bible reading normally takes place in either a family or church setting. These literacy practices “straddle the distinction between individual and social worlds” and may be understood as “existing in the relations between people, within groups and communities, rather than as properties of individuals” (Barton and Hamilton 2000: 8). They also straddle the

distinction between literacy and orality, blending the two as the discussion and critical analysis of written texts that are read publicly is often conducted orally. Examples of such events include the reading of government announcements at weddings, funerals, and church services; the reading of life histories at funerals; the reading of scriptures at Bible studies and church services; and the reading of minutes at committee meetings. These “literacy events provide nodal points where there is a dialectic translation of micro-level knowledge, relationships and subjectivity, into macro-level regimes of truth, structural positioning and identity” (Maybin 2000: 208). Personal interaction with knowledge, as conveyed through written text, is thus experienced in the context of community when textual content is corporately organised through culturally acknowledged epistemological systems into communally accepted knowledge. This communal formulation of knowledge imbues the community members with a sense of interdependent identity. Pedagogy needs to take reading processes into account (Scribner 1997c: 204). However, when this potentially fruitful communal dimension is ignored by giving preference to an external individualised view of literacy over the dynamic local usage of literacy and orality, critical reflection is forfeited or, at minimum, hampered.

An individualistic approach to literacy apart from orality increases the distance between education and the community and fractures both communal and personal identity. As was examined in chapter two, the concept of education which is characterised by the removal of the learner from the community while studying violates the community-based integrated approach of indigenous learning. This distancing fosters the development of Gramsci’s independent intellectuals (Gramsci 1971: 7), an educated elite who are in danger of becoming culturally illiterate (Hinzen 1987: 79-80). It provides the ‘educated’ with status, as recognised in this study by the adult educators themselves, but with little communal impact. Despite the concerted and conscious efforts of educators to develop academic programmes that enable adults to maintain physical and even residential contact with their sending communities,¹⁴⁴ this emphasis on an academic form of literacy without regard for the

¹⁴⁴ This was particularly emphasised at Jinja Baptist Seminary, but also at the Kamuli COU college.

locally situated literacies of the students creates a critical disjuncture in the ownership of knowledge. Sadly, the product of this external academic literacy is theology as theory instead of theology as lived.¹⁴⁵ Doing theology takes a theoretical turn, distancing itself from the practical theology of the very communities these adult learners want to serve (Martey 1993; Mugambi 1989).

The dynamic potential which resides at the interface between literacy and orality is lost when theological colleges in Uganda prioritise an external approach to academic literacy without recognising the locally situated concurrent use of literacy and orality. This might be termed a deficit model of literacy, but not in the usual sense of the term. The deficit is not focused upon the learners, but rather upon the educators and their system. "The deficit, if there is one to be located, is in a society that excludes, reduces and ridicules the rich means of communication that exist amongst its people" (Crowther et al. 2001: 4).

LANGUAGE: MEANING AND OWNERSHIP

Language plays a pivotal role in the ownership of knowledge. The predominant choice of English as the language of instruction carries with it tremendous ramifications relating to motivation, understanding, access and ownership. The importance of language to ownership emerged during the process of data collection and on-going analysis. The researcher was surprised by the tenacity with which it maintained a priority in the consciousness of instructors and students alike. Central to this concern are the ways in which language is used and the apparent purpose of its use as revealed through observation.

As seen in the previous chapter, English was cited as the preferred language of instruction by 73% of the survey respondents. The survey revealed that the primary reason for desiring English was because it offered access to people and the second

¹⁴⁵ While this may be true in the North as well, the clash between this segregated and individualised academic approach to literacy and the communal pattern of working with texts in Uganda creates epistemological conflicts which shake both one's ownership of knowledge and one's identity to the core.

was that it is the national language of Uganda. Interviews revealed other reasons why English is so valued, which include the access it provides to books, teachers and international resources (COU o.i. 25/05/01; BUU o.i. 10/7/01). Katahoire, a lecturer in Adult Education at Makerere, highlighted the importance of English when she stated, *"English is the 'language of power.' Adults cannot be empowered without English. English offers access to libraries. Without it, one can't expand horizons"* (o.i. 16/07/01). In reference to the opportunity afforded by English for progression to further studies, a COU college principal said, *"They can't do that without English. So that's why we emphasise English at their level"* (COU o.i. 25/05/01).

Despite such a high demand for English, both classroom observation and interviews revealed the use of English to be a primary obstacle to understanding and therefore to the ownership of knowledge. This affirms the emphasis which the sociocultural, radical and discourse theories (chapter three) place upon the role of language in literacy, empowerment, and the manipulation of knowledge. As was noted in chapter five, comprehension of English words was a major obstacle, requiring constant reference to definitions. Katahoire comments that even when definitions are understood, the English which is prevalent in Uganda remains definitional, essentially stripped of its contextual meanings. Students simply identify words by definition, without understanding the innuendoes and broader meanings which are intuitive for the person who learned English within a broad, English-based, cultural setting (o.i. 16/07/01). Gough and Bock point to a similar problem among university students in South Africa (Gough and Bock 2001: 104). Languages develop contextual breadth and depth as they are adapted for everyday use within a culture. Such common-place usage enables the penetration of language by culture and develops patterns of connotation as well as denotation. However, when a language is restricted to particular societal contexts only, such as academic or government affairs, it remains outside of everyday life and culture and so does not develop the same contextual richness. °

Knowledge, then, which is conveyed through English to learners who have only a minimal and 'definitional' facility in English becomes rarefied, stripped of its

richness and breadth.¹⁴⁶ Language is not simply the assembly of words and conventions as objects to be described. Meaning is not conveyed in words and sentences as if neatly packaged in containers by the speaker or writer and transferred to a receiver who simply unpacks the container and places the contents in his or her own head (Gee 1990: 79-80). Rather, language is invested with political, cultural and ideological meanings which vie for power and influence (Fairclough 1992: 7). Neither is meaning fixed in language, but rather it is a “continually negotiated process of meaning-making and meaning-taking” (Street 2001: 19; Janks and Ivanic 1992: 330). The English words used in adult theological education in Uganda are emasculated, stripped of their depth and ideology due to a lack of cultural and political linguistic context. Their definitional use stymies the process of meaning-making since the contextual background for meaning-taking is missing. The learner who understands the standard language incompletely

necessarily has an intuition of the world which is more or less limited and provincial, which is fossilised and anachronistic in relation to the major currents of thought which dominate world history. His interests will be limited, more or less corporate or economic, not universal (Gramsci 1971: 325).

The preference for English as the language of instruction stands in sharp contrast to its simultaneous frustration of learning and of the ownership of knowledge. The pressure to know English and its powerful influence politically, culturally, educationally and economically may be termed “linguistic imperialism”¹⁴⁷ (Phillipson 1992). English appropriates superior characteristics for itself through its consistently increasing global significance (Skutnabb-Kangas 2000).¹⁴⁸ This is

¹⁴⁶ Jomo Kenyatta looked at this as the deficit of the teacher, rather than of the student. He said that if the instructor failed to learn the vernacular at more than just a cursory level, it would be impossible for him to “translate many of the most important terms of social intercourse into African speech” (Kenyatta 1938: 125).

¹⁴⁷ For a fascinating study of how English came to such a dominant position and how its use today conveys potentially powerful linguistic hegemonic forces which impact societies and other languages world-wide, see Phillipson (1992). Additionally, for a fascinating example of such imperialism, see Wilshire (1964).

¹⁴⁸ While increasing its own value, a national language such as English may even lead to the demise of other languages (Skutnabb-Kangas 2000).

evidenced in the words of an Ugandan instructor in one of the Baptist colleges as he explained why English alone could serve effectively as the language of instruction.

English is very precise. I think, I will say it's more of a scientific language because it's well defined than the vernacular language we speak. And then the other thing, Uganda has several languages. So which language are you going to teach? (BUU o.i. 23/01/01)

The consequence of such “imperialism” is an unstoppable drive on the part of adult learners to know English so as to avoid being seen as linguistically disadvantaged.¹⁴⁹

Ruptures increase when this desire for learning English is not addressed directly by the colleges, but is instead expected to take place concomitantly with theological study. Only two colleges (both of them with the BUU) out of the four that used English as the language of instruction even offered a course in English. One of the COU colleges had also noted the problem and was making plans to begin teaching English in its own right as a subject. Teaching English as a second language at the beginning of the curriculum would address the desire of students to gain English as an access language. It would also facilitate better communication in the classroom setting. Yet, the development of a contextualised sense of the English language can only be attained through sufficient informal contact with and use of English among speakers who already have a linguistically contextualised mastery of the language. It is this aspect of language learning that is glaringly absent. When the adults return to their home areas, rarely is English used either in the home, as shown by the survey, or in the community. Yet, the contextualised mastery of a language, as previously mentioned, requires its regular use in the commonplace settings of life. Since this does not happen in the rural contexts from which these students come, English remains, for them, a restrictor of ownership.

This linguistic obstacle was not left totally unchallenged by the adults in these colleges, however. Interviews, PRA and observation all revealed the use of

¹⁴⁹ Burchfield refers to this as “linguistic deprivation” (Burchfield 1985: 161-162). However, ‘deprivation’ connotes the restriction or removal of a necessity. Yet, the researcher knows many Ugandans who are very intelligent and excel in life without the knowledge of English.

indigenous languages (or other local 'trade' languages such as Kiswahili and Luganda) for clarifying, processing and, therefore, owning knowledge. Some instructors who had already attained higher levels of education and thus had experienced greater degrees of socialisation and exchange in English and in the secondary academic discourse, explained how they personally processed knowledge from English, through the vernacular, and then back into English in order to gain a greater sense of understanding (o.i. 16/07/01; BUU o.i. 23/01/01). However, this process normally took place communally among adults in theological colleges. It happened when working in college fields, in dormitories, under trees, anywhere that was available for informal discussions. One of the COU colleges, recognising the need of the vernacular for understanding, had made the decision to allow instructors to use the vernacular when necessary alongside of English. As the principal said,

There are times when we talk in English. There are times when we talk in, or we translate in Lusoga. We use both languages. The local, Lusoga, and then the English. We talk the English in order to encourage them to learn it. But at the same time we want them to learn what we are teaching. So we go down, translate, and then they learn at the same time. ...The person's ability to learn in an indigenous language is faster. Because that's the language he uses all the time, all the time, all the time. But once you emphasise English alone, because even those who practise English, if you train them in Lusoga, they will still understand better (COU o.i. 25/05/01).

The work of reprocessing knowledge through the medium of the vernacular is fundamental, according to Katahoire, for the understanding and internalisation of knowledge to be effective. Additionally, a primary grasp of the vernacular, which includes its contextual meaning, increases one's ability to grasp the breadth of meaning in a second national language. She states,

English is still the bridge for learning. They may put the new knowledge back into the vernacular in order to process it and to internalise it, but they will use English as the access language. Adults who master the vernacular have much greater depth of understanding though. The English language is understood within a culture. Because language is in context, the vernacular enables them to understand concepts within the context of where they are. They then have an advantage in understanding English because they can work new knowledge and concepts through in the vernacular.

These children who are growing up now with English as the first language and the vernacular as a second language are at a disadvantage. Their understanding is often very shallow because they miss out on the contextual

meaning here in Uganda. They lose out on the cultural aspect of understanding language. The English which they speak is lacking the cultural dimension. It is a sort of Ugandan English. Maybe with time it will develop a cultural dimension and will have meaning within the Ugandan context, but not right now (o.i. 25/05/01).

This need for the re-contextualising of knowledge linguistically resonates with both linguistic and literacy theory:

Context is a mental construct, since whenever we speak, the whole world and every thing the speaker knows and believes or has ever seen or experienced are potentially part of the context, so the hearer and the speaker must assume (imagine) just how much of all this is relevant and so really part of the context and not just possibly so (Gee 1990: 83).

The use of language, whether orally or in written text, necessarily includes and involves interaction between people, their culture and the socio-political context.

Every discursal instance has three dimensions: it is a spoken or written language *text*; it is an *interaction* between people, involving processes of producing and interpreting the text; and it is part of a piece of *social action* – and in some cases virtually the whole of it (Fairclough 1992: 10).

These linguistic emphases of text, interaction, and social action are also reflected in literacy studies as when Maybin states that “language mediates people’s interactions with texts, both at the local level in actual dialogues, and in terms of the broader discourses which shape local uses and meanings” (Maybin 2000: 197).

The demand, then, for English cannot be denied. Yet, the obstacles to understanding and ownership created by the use of English as the language of instruction for these adults must be recognised as well. The nature of language as contextualised and the lack of exposure to English in natural settings have resulted in a rarefied usage which is primarily definitional. Language, used orally or in texts, is therefore diminished in its meaning-making and meaning-taking potential. Emphasis needs to be given to teaching English as a second language in order to facilitate comprehension, and opportunity must be provided for the use of the vernacular as a clarifying and processing resource for knowledge and its ownership.

HEGEMONY: CONTROLLING KNOWLEDGE

The overt focus of Christianity is 'salvation', with particular concern for promoting justice and freedom from oppression.¹⁵⁰ It is interesting therefore to find within the theological education of Christian church leaders forces which restrict and control ownership and innovative work with knowledge, holding it back as a special prize reserved for the elite. This problem led the assembled African theologians in Accra to claim, "The missionary church in Africa has used education as a means of domestication"¹⁵¹ (Pan African Conference of Third World Theologians 1979: 191). It is surprising, then, to see such 'domestication' through the control of knowledge and the determination of who has the right to use knowledge continuing in self-governing churches and their theological education institutions, such as the COU and the RCC in Uganda. The BUU is also self-governing, although it must be recognised that there is a greater degree of missionary influence in the BUU theological colleges than in the COU and RCC colleges that were a part of this study. Either the missionaries were so effective in promoting such control that decades after relinquishing direct oversight, their influence continues unabated, or these denominations have appropriated, consciously or unconsciously, similar controlling mechanisms.¹⁵² As was discussed at length in chapter three, this may be out of a desire to maintain orthodoxy of scriptural interpretation. However, a proper conceptualisation of the role of hermeneutics within the context of scripture should promote a liberating rather than a limiting effect.

The restrictive control of knowledge by ideologies, structures or people may properly be termed hegemonic because such control excludes other knowledge and presents 'accepted' ideas as common-sense reality. These ideas may be conveyed through a

¹⁵⁰ See for instance Micah 6:8; Luke 4:18-19.

¹⁵¹ This is a generalisation and cannot be asserted as characteristic of all missionary-led education. Yet, it is important in that it vividly portrays the felt sense of repression experienced by these theologians under missionary controlled education.

¹⁵² The question of whether this control is intentional or unintentional within these denominations is beyond the remit of this research, although it would be an interesting area of study for possible future research.

“hidden curriculum”, which tacitly teaches learners the norms and values which dictate their place and role, in this case within the church and in the use of knowledge, through the normal routines and expectations of everyday life within the institutions. Such norms and values may be communicated by instructors without them even realising their contribution to this hegemony (Apple 1990). These processes may be both “hidden and overt” (Apple 1982: 2) and cannot be simplified into an uni-directional process of reproduction (Apple 1995: 61). Nevertheless, an awareness of such hegemonic and hidden control mechanisms or strategies should provide educators with the opportunity to identify and analyse them (Sehlaoui 2001: 44), developing a sense of praxis in response to them and providing the space within which transformative action and ownership may occur.

Three such restrictive forces were identified among the colleges involved in this study. They are derived from the above analysis of discourses, literacy and orality and the role of language in theological colleges. They must now be critiqued explicitly in light of the control which they exert over the ownership and use of knowledge. These are the distancing of the instructor from the learners, the use of a specific form of literacy as a method of control, and language as control.

First, then, the distancing both physically and professionally of the instructor from the adult learners clearly communicates a distinction between the intellectual professional and the practical learner. This is conveyed both spatially and relationally. As Katahoire points out, this distance is even more significant in light of the traditionally hierarchical cultures that these adults represent (o.i. 16/07/01), which easily enable the self-distancing of instructors from learners. However, it defies the clear experience of learning in the lives of key church leaders (Bisika, Life History, 15/05/01). A graduate of one of the BUU colleges, who is now the BUU General Secretary, recalled that the part of his theological education which impacted him the most did not take place at the institution, but was centred rather on the close personal mentoring which he received from a more experienced pastor in the field (BUU o.i. 25/04/01).

The effectiveness of the close relationship between instructor and learner which is such an integral part of traditional learning patterns is replaced in these institutions

by distance. Students involved in a PRA session at the Jinja Baptist Seminary described the teachers as sources of information to be accessed in the classroom, much as a library might be considered in the North (BUU, PRA, 04/04/01). One graduate complained that teachers are removed from what they teach (BUU o.i. 10/07/01). This distancing communicates a power differential. Bridges across power differences begin to form through relationships that encourage shared influence (Norton 2001: 170). The reverse is also true. Relational distancing between instructors and learners interrupts the free flow of knowledge and creates a pattern of knowledge control. Learners are given only what is deemed 'appropriate' for them at pre-determined times and venues, while the instructors retain for themselves enough knowledge to ensure their continued preferential status.

Secondly, literacy may be used as a control factor, as was suggested in chapter three, by emphasising one form of literacy as the dominant or legitimate form while simultaneously ignoring or downplaying the locally situated literacy of the learner as a less valued form. "Literacy practices are patterned by social institutions and power relationships, and some literacies are more dominant, visible and influential than others" (Barton and Hamilton 2000: 7). One way in which these dominant literacies are legitimated is through the statuses and roles of people engaged in them (Tusting et al. 2000: 216). The connection between this kind of legitimisation of a particular literacy as dominant with the distancing of instructors from learners is clear. The instructors are perceived as those with special status and abilities who have a higher degree of facility in the literacy that really counts. That literacy is the one associated with the secondary academic discourse: individualistic and reflective, distanced from orality and community.

The adult learner, who has minimal opportunity to acquire this secondary discourse and who has minimal access to the texts which nourish it, finds himself relegated to a lesser literacy, without legitimisation and without status. In an effort to appear as a participant in the legitimised literacy, students frequently mentioned to the researcher the great importance of written texts. *"Yeah, text books. It is the best, one of the best things."* Yet, at the same time, they relate how difficult it is to grasp this form of literacy. As the same adult learner stated, *"Even today, there are some books,*

which we still have a problem because of English. But anyway, we are trying to grasp things" (BUU o.i. 07/12/00). When questioned, students were determined that the most important places for learning were the classroom and library, yet when they were simply discussing among themselves they enthusiastically concurred that real learning took place outside of the classroom (BUU, PRA, 09/11/00 and 04/04/01; RCC, PRA, 26/03/01). The imposition and retention of an external legitimate form of literacy without facilitating the learners' acquisition and development of that literacy is a means of controlling learner access to and manipulation of what is perceived to be accepted forms of knowledge. Consequently, these adults are reduced to accepting as 'given' the knowledge which is transferred from the instructor to them through lectures. Dutifully, they record that knowledge in its raw and unworked state by carefully copying their notes word for word from the blackboard. Proud as they are of these notes as a record of their time at the institution, these hand-written texts serve as a concrete reminder of their exclusion from the realm of owning and working with knowledge through their lack of membership within the dominant and legitimised literacy of the academic discourse.

Language also serves to control who is able to creatively manipulate and own knowledge by restricting access. Interestingly, the primary value credited to English as the preferred language of instruction was the access which it provides to the learner. However, English, as the dominant instructional language, also serves to restrict access to knowledge through its de-coupling from context, as noted earlier. Effective working with knowledge through English is then restricted to those who have been able to acquire the cultural context of the English used in theological education, primarily that of Britain and North America. As the opportunity for such acquisition is minimal for these adult learners, control over the ownership of knowledge is effectively imposed. The effect of this is hegemonic in that it supports and establishes the dominant academic culture.

In addition, the use of English for instruction controls knowledge and who is allowed to use it by imposing an external set of ideologies, structures and practices which

sometimes subliminally and other times openly accompany the language itself.¹⁵³ This is a form of linguisticism, defined as “ideologies, structures, and practices which are used to legitimate, effectuate, and reproduce an unequal division of power and resources (both material and immaterial) between groups which are defined on the basis of language” (Phillipson 1992: 47). The use of the English language may exert a hegemonic influence then “if the pre-eminence of English is legitimated as being a ‘common-sense’ social fact, thus concealing whose interests are being served by the dominant ideology and dominant professional practice” (Phillipson 1992: 76).

This does not mean that English is simply a tool of domination, resistant to all change. With time, language may be reshaped within a culture, both reflecting and influencing that culture as has happened to English in North America. If English is eventually used in the commonplace dimensions of life and is penetrated by the local culture, as previously discussed, that culture may have a moderating influence on these hegemonic and ideological forces embedded within it. However, cultural and linguistic heritages naturally resist being supplanted in this way, slowing the cultural adoption of English. Meanwhile, those who control the access to desired knowledge, in this case church leaders and theological faculty, benefit by increased status and control over the creative manipulation of knowledge. Perhaps unintentionally, the Northern theological constructions of knowledge may also be preserved from extensive and rigorous Ugandan critique by maintaining English as the language of instruction.

English, then, serves both to promote and restrict access to knowledge. While promising empowerment, it simultaneously disempowers through its de-coupling from context and its potential to promote inequality on the basis of language.

CONCLUSION

Control of knowledge and its use is maintained, then, in the theological colleges which were a part of this study through the distancing of instructors from learners,

¹⁵³ This hegemonic process may include the glorification of English, the stigmatisation of indigenous languages and the rationalisation of the whole process (Skutnabb-Kangas 2000: 195-203).

through the use of a legitimated literacy that discredits the locally situated literacies of the learners, and through the use of English as the language of instruction. 'Domestication' through education continues today, in the sense of the regulated control of knowledge and its manipulation, despite the ending, in most cases, of direct external control of theological education by missionaries. By maintaining a Northern bias for literacy over orality,¹⁵⁴ these institutions resist the African preference for lived theology, yet fail to replace it with theorised theology, resulting in a decontextualised, fragmented transfer of theological information. The primary discourse of the adult learners is not enabled while the acquisition of the secondary academic discourse is not facilitated.

This disjuncture produces frustration at all levels in Ugandan theological education. In the words of Musiime, an Ugandan theologian and education specialist, "*People don't know what theology is all about. They are not able to manipulate theological concepts*" (o.i. 10/07/01). Disjuncture produces ruptures in ownership. An instructor lamented, "*I just can't get through to them!*" (o.i. 02/04/01). And a graduate noted, "*Some people are intimidated by knowledge. Although they are taught new things, until they see it done in practice, it can be intimidating and so they fear to try. They just go back and do what they know*" (BUU o.i. 10/07/01). These ruptures frustrate the development and creative use of knowledge, while disabling its liberating and transformative power. Education that substitutes knowledge transfer for knowledge ownership is debilitating and controlling. A way out must be found.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁴ As noted in chapters one and two, it is not simply that this literacy-based education system has been imposed upon the South. There is a strong Southern demand for this very form of education. Yet, its effects upon the ownership of knowledge remain the same, regardless of who is complicit in its perpetuation.

¹⁵⁵ A similar phrase, "learning our way out," is used differently in a fascinating book which calls for adult education to resist being used by the dominant political and economic forces for development from above rather than from below (Finger and Asun 2001).

Chapter Seven

CRITICAL REFLECTIONS: IN SEARCH OF OWNERSHIP

The voice of participants in Ugandan theological education reveals disparity between two worlds of learning, a clash between orality and literacy and the problem which English presents to adult learners as they grapple with knowledge, as related in chapter five. An analysis of these essential issues through critical literacy and discourse theories, in chapter six, revealed that theological knowledge is controlled by the distancing of instructors from learners, by the use of a legitimated literacy that discredits the locally situated literacies of the learners, and by the use of English as the language of instruction. These educational patterns frustrate the development of meta-level knowledge and interdiscursivity, restricting the ability of adult learners to manipulate knowledge creatively and innovatively. The radical potentialities of owning knowledge are replaced by the taming and disabling effects of receiving others' knowledge as a prescribed and closed system.

The tools and opportunity for manipulating knowledge creatively and effectively must be provided in order for the ownership of knowledge to become a reality. Interestingly, it is the voice of the adult learners that begins to point the way out of an education of disjuncture. The coupling of that voice with theory suggests a way into a curricular and pedagogical space where ownership may become a reality.

HERMENEUTICS: LIBERATING LITERACY FOR OWNERSHIP

Promoting and enabling the ownership of knowledge within adult theological education in Uganda requires the liberating potentialities uniquely released through hermeneutics. Hermeneutics facilitates the interpretation of oral and written texts, whether individually or communally, while maintaining the integrity of the original text. It stimulates and promotes ownership through critical reflective analysis, encouraging the creative and interpretively appropriate manipulation and development of knowledge. In brief, it promotes powerful and transformative literacy practice.

There have been significant and repeated calls by educators (Semali and Kincheloe 1999: 37) and leading African theologians for a greater emphasis to be placed upon hermeneutics within the church in Africa (Martey 1993; Mbiti 1986; Mugambi 1989; Mushete 1979), enabling Christianity's message to "penetrate African ways of thinking and living" (Mudimbe 1988: 56). According to Kwesi Dickson, the need for Africans themselves to use hermeneutic and interpretive skills to reveal the continuity between the Bible and "African life and thought" means that "the text and the African ... are bound together" (Dickson 1979: 106). Kato asserts that hermeneutics is a necessary prerequisite to "expressing theological concepts in terms of the African situation." This is essential, because "the final word has not yet been said in expressing Christianity" (Kato 1975: 182). However, the reality in adult theological education is that the transfer of theological content continues to take precedence over the development of critical interpretive skills. This betrays a hidden curriculum and a pedagogy which "tries, though not always successfully, to ensure that its discourse is safe rather than dangerous" (Bernstein 1990: 76).

A significant absence of hermeneutics was noticed in most of the curricula used in the colleges. The COU and RCC colleges did not include hermeneutics in their curricula at all. Both of the BUU colleges did offer some form of hermeneutics. Jinja Seminary offered only a simplified 'Bible Study Methods' for one term (out of nine terms total) while WUBTC offered hermeneutics proper for three terms (out of six terms total). Interestingly, the final term in this second college has unofficially been dropped because none of the resident instructors feels capable of teaching it. Significantly, many of the students and graduates from this BUU college cited hermeneutics as the most valuable part of the curriculum. One graduate said of hermeneutics, "*It was very very important, because it gave me the ability or the skill, you know, just to get the facts just by myself, not just depending on the teacher or any other people*" (BUU o.i. 07/11/00). Another graduate said that hermeneutics was the most enjoyable and beneficial course at the college: it "*opened up how to study the Bible*" (BUU o.i. 13/11/00). Importantly, he also stated that he still uses it, but not always just by himself. He enjoys studying the Bible with others.

The use of hermeneutics, in the Ugandan context, must be developed by adult learners in culturally appropriate ways. This demands that individual work with texts should be complemented by a communal dimension in the hermeneutic process.¹⁵⁶ When asked how it is that pastors find answers to issues and problems they face while in actual ministry, a Baptist leader responded, *"I think it's not through books, but I think it's when we come together"* (BUU o.i. 07/11/00). This response was repeated in many interviews. The emphasis on learning orally with peers, which is so prevalent in indigenous education patterns, needs to be appropriated and developed within the hermeneutic process in Uganda.

While conducting field research, the researcher became aware of this dimension of communal learning which was emerging through interviews, PRA and observation. When asked by the Director of WUBTC, one of the BUU colleges, to teach a concentrated course on hermeneutics, he decided to substitute the usual individualised study and work assignments with peer or group projects which could be conducted in the language of the students' choice. Each group's work was then critiqued orally by the other groups. The results included a significant increase in both interest and performance. Even when asked to work alone during the assessment at the end of the course, significant improvement was noted in the scores of students over previous years.

The development of hermeneutic skills demystifies written texts, including the Bible, and enables the learner (pastor, lay reader or catechist) to creatively and originally interact with text. It facilitates, then, both ownership and consequent agency. It provides the space in which a theology can be worked out which "arises from and is accountable to African people" (Pan African Conference of Third World Theologians 1979: 193). At the same time, it provides recognisable parameters within which both oral and written textual interpretation is made possible. Yet, if adult theological education in Uganda is to witness this reversal of priorities from content to process and from transfer to ownership, there must be a concurrent

¹⁵⁶ This contrast reflects the important difference that audience plays in literacy-based and orality-based contexts, as was developed in chapter two.

commitment to “learn to respect but also to trust people” (Martin and Rahman 2001: 129). Releasing, rather than controlling knowledge, requires trust. Prioritising hermeneutics entails an extension of power to adult learners in place of the retention of power and control over knowledge by instructors and church leaders.

DEVELOPING OWNERSHIP THROUGH A MEDIATED APPROACH

The disjuncture between learners’ primary discourses and the secondary discourse of the theological institution has been shown to lead to a rupture in the provision for and the ability to develop a transformative ownership of knowledge. This results from a severe breakdown in the acquisition of the secondary discourse and a simultaneous restriction of the use of the primary discourse within the educational context. Meta-level discursive knowledge is thus frustrated, with the consequent disabling of the ownership of knowledge.

Situated literacy practices are disregarded within adult theological education in Uganda (although less so in the RCC college) in favour of a dominant legitimated academic literacy. Consequently, the potential which exists within traditional orality as it is infused with literacy and as evidenced within local literacy practices and events is forfeited. Indigenous languages with their contextual richness and potential for ownership are exchanged for a rarefied, definitional form of English which lacks contextual depth and serves to deny as well as to avail access to knowledge.

A mediated educational approach suggests a way out of this disjunctive education replacing the restriction of interdiscursivity with its promotion. It recognises the academic and societal values associated with the formalised education system which leads to recognised certification. It accepts the very real demand for English in education, for study within the dominant and legitimised literacy, for instructor-mediated communication of knowledge and for the development of necessary leadership skills such as public speaking. At the same time, it values locally situated literacy practices, indigenous learning patterns, the richness of contextualised vernacular languages, and the ownership of knowledge.

A mediated approach would be characterised not by blending or merging divergent curricula or pedagogies but by the provision of a space in which the learners and

instructors alike are invited and enabled to develop connections between discourses, literacies, learning patterns and languages. It expands on Bhabha's "in-between cultural space," Gee's "borderland Discourse" theory and what Wilson calls a "third-space" (Bhabha 1994; Gee 1990; Wilson 2000). Pushing beyond raw description of what is taking place, a mediated approach would be interventionist, scripting into the pedagogy and curriculum a space which mediates between the multiple discourses and literacies represented by the learners and the institutional frameworks. Conscious intervention, which must include learners, instructors and policy makers, avoids the phenomenon that Kell terms "literacy as sign" (Kell 2001: 102-103) in which the identification of literacy with a set of generic skills creates a barrier to the emergence of a third space, resulting in a hyper-pedagogised literacy with little resemblance to what goes on in the everyday life of students. Providing participation in the secondary discourse and the dominant literacy while simultaneously enabling and encouraging the use of the learners' primary discourses and local literacy practices, opens up a space in which learners and instructors can together begin to work with knowledge innovatively and with an increased sense of ownership.

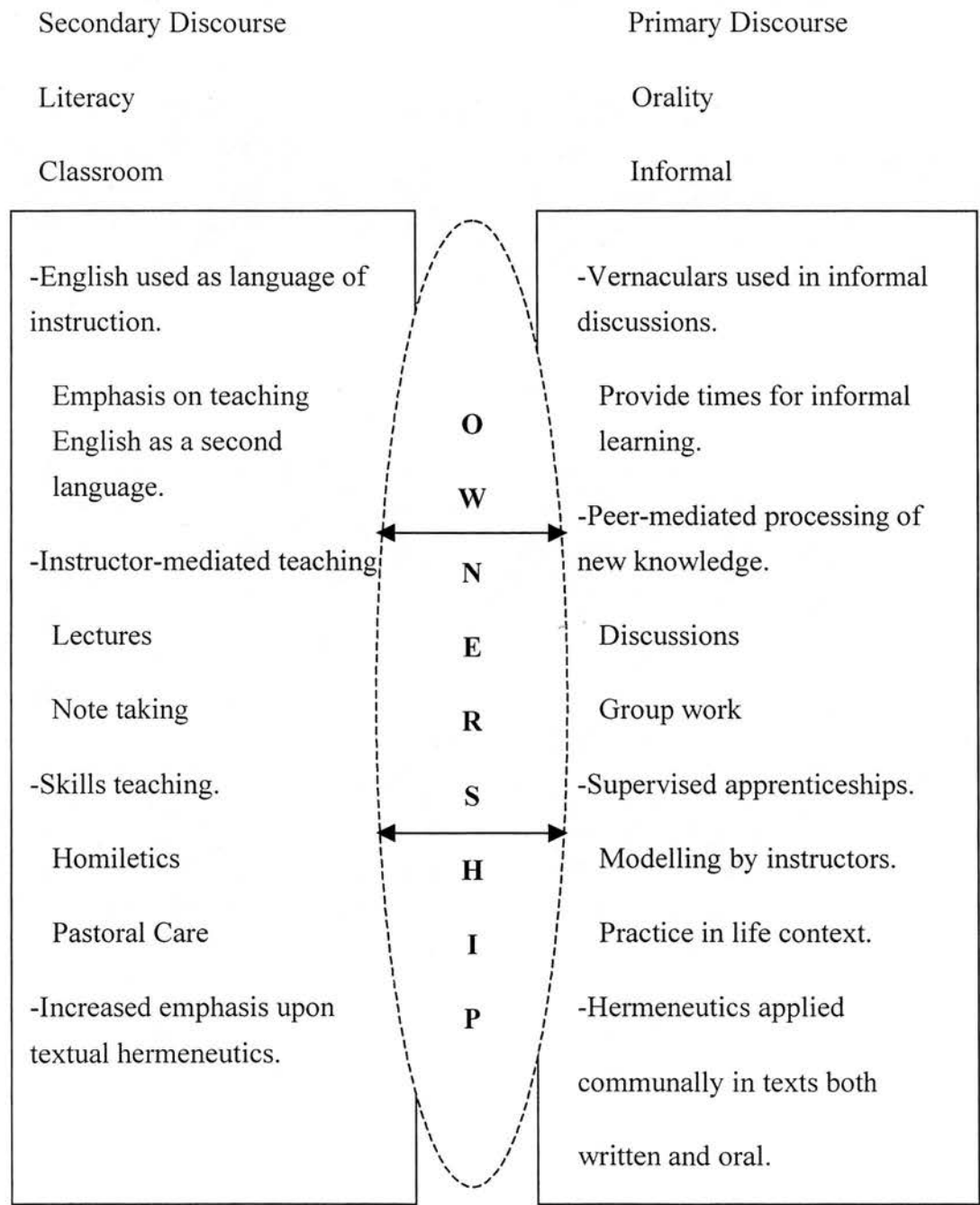
A mediated approach consciously seeks to facilitate and encourage both literacy and orality, both formal and informal, both secondary and primary discourses, as is seen in Figure 7.1. Recognising the lack of opportunity to acquire English in its contextualised richness, the use of English as the language of instruction must be coupled with the facilitation of informal discussion in the vernacular. The contextual richness of the vernacular may, then, inform the relative poverty of definitional English to provide the linguistic depth and breadth necessary for the meaningful manipulation of knowledge. Emphasis upon the teaching of English, as well as instruction in English, would promote access to people and knowledge through English rather than its frustration. Instructor-mediated teaching of new knowledge in the classroom, including lectures and note taking, would be coupled with peer-mediated discussions and group work to facilitate the communal processing and development of knowledge. The teaching of skills such as homiletics and pastoral care would be complemented by supervised apprenticeships, including modelling by

instructors and supervised practice, preferably with peers in a real life context.¹⁵⁷ Finally, an increased emphasis upon teaching hermeneutic skills when working with texts would consciously be applied communally in the interpretation of both verbal and oral texts. Thus, space is provided in which 'doing theology' becomes an interdiscursive dialogue between theology as theory and theology as lived.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁷ Ellerman calls this the "brokering of doer-to-doer learning" (Ellerman 2002: 13).

¹⁵⁸ The observations and principles derived from this study may well have a degree of transferability to other educational settings, even tertiary education, in Uganda and elsewhere. Such transferability would be in proportion to the similarity of students and the academic and cultural/social contexts, as noted in chapter four. Evidence of this was noted, in chapter five, at Makerere University by Okech (o.i. 23/07/01) and by the Rector of the Philosophy Centre of Jinja (o.i. 29/07/01). The first Annual Report of the Department of Extra-Mural Studies at Makerere reveals a preliminary understanding of the importance of some of these principles for adults in education when it says, "...coming together for common study..., personal contact with specialist lecturers, meeting with fellow students from other tribes and occupations, informal discussion outside the lecture room: all these are part of an educational experience which is emotional as well as intellectual" (Extra-Mural Studies 1954: 9). Watson states, "Educational ideas and practices have a universality about them which all too frequently transcend national barriers" (Watson 1984: 6). Although this process is usually seen to flow from the North to the South, perhaps it would be profitable to consider the inverse as well.

Figure 7.1 – A mediated approach to adult theological education.



The development of such a mediated approach would not be without its detractors. Adult learners’ expectations may have been shaped by experience to treat literacy as

a neutral skill and such innovation in curriculum may cut “against the grain of cultural expectations” (Crowther and Tett 2001: 113). Students may also feel that they are cheated by having less time spent in the formal education setting, which continues to be regarded as ‘real education.’ Instructors similarly may feel that they will have less time to teach the knowledge that they believe they have and the learners need. Yet, the benefits of learning the way out of the ruptures in adult theological education and into the richness of ownership are surely worth some effort.

Consistency with the theoretical grounding of this mediated approach would require carefully listening to those who express opposition, in order to understand their resistance. It would then involve a process of apprenticeship for faculty and students, rather than simply teaching instructors through seminars or imposing change through a shift in policy. Respected theologians and teachers would need to model a mediated approach, possibly alongside the current formalised system, enabling ongoing dialogue and evaluation among all of the stakeholders in order to facilitate openness, learning and ownership of such a pedagogical shift.

Such mediation between divergent tensions within Ugandan theological education would provide a dynamic space for the ownership of knowledge. This space would be fed from two directions: from the formalised institutional discourse and the informal traditional discourses of the learners. Both instructors and learners would find the opportunity to work with knowledge authentically and creatively within this space. Martey’s concern that “most of the African theologians who are enthusiastic about African culture are themselves alienated from that culture” and therefore cannot inculturate theology within it (Martey 1993: 124) may be addressed through the provision of such a mediated space as it encourages active interplay between the authentic contexts of real discourses. At the same time, adult learners who desire to learn within the respected and accepted formalised educational process would be enabled to use their primary discourse interdiscursively to develop within this mediated space a sense of ownership and the ability to work with knowledge to transform their personal, communal and congregational worlds.

A mediated approach to adult theological education in Uganda offers a way out of what may be termed an education of rupture and disjuncture. Yet, it is more than just a way out. It points the way into a new discursive space, characterised by ownership, authenticity and creativity. It makes provision for the fostering of a space in which knowledge may be understood, processed and developed contextually by both learners and instructors. Constructed within the shared space of two worlds, such knowledge has the potential to transform those worlds. This thesis argues that the creative space for the authentic and transformative ownership of knowledge can only be secured by recognising and accepting the value of divergent discourses and by purposively enabling and facilitating their 'co-habitation' within the curriculum and pedagogy of adult theological education in Uganda.

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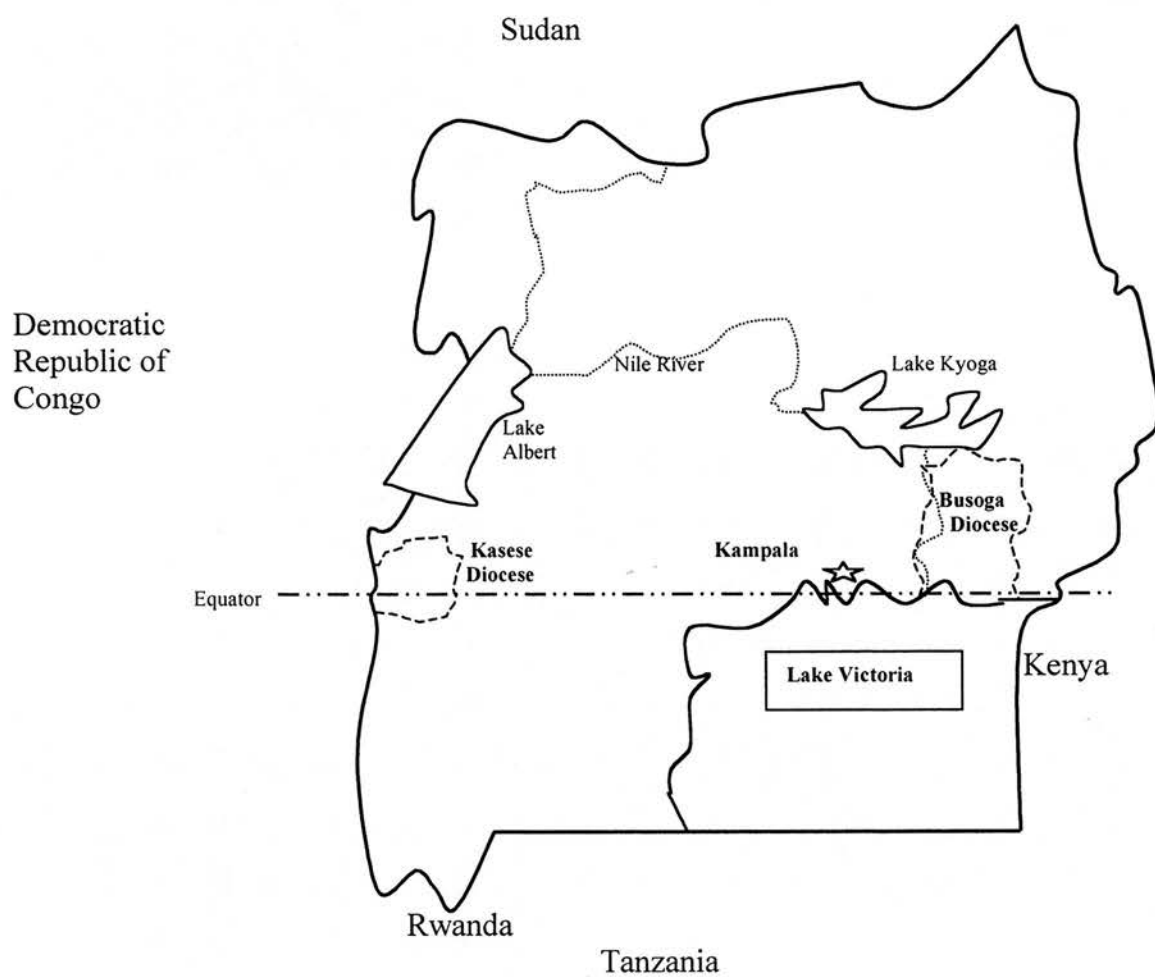
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APPENDIX ONE

UGANDA MAP



APPENDIX TWO

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION SURVEY

Please write the name of your theological school here: _____

1. What is the name of the home district where you live?
2. What is the first language you learned as an infant?
3. What language do you speak at home?
4. What language does your church at home use on Sundays?
5. How old are you? If you don't know, guess.
6. In what year did you become a Christian?
7. How well do you feel you speak the language you use for theological training?
Circle the best answer.
Very well.
Okay, but still learning.
Just enough to manage.
Poorly.
8. How well do you feel you read the language you use for theological training?
Circle the best answer.
Very well.
Okay, but still learning.
Just enough to manage.
Poorly.
9. How well do you feel you write the language you use for theological training?
Circle the best answer.
Very well.
Okay, but still learning.
Just enough to manage.
Poorly.

10. How many years of school did you finish in the Ugandan system? Circle the last year completed.

None P1 P2 P3 P4 P5 P6 P7 S1 S2 S3 S4 S5 S6

11. Did you attend a Technical or Vocational College before coming to this school? Circle one. Yes / No

12. If you were able to study theology in any language, which language would you choose? Please give the language and explain why you would choose that language below.

13. When you are at home and not studying for school, how much time do you spend every day reading newspapers or books? Circle one.

a) 0-30 minutes b) 30 – 60 minutes c) 1 – 2 hours d) more than 2 hours

14. Where do you think the course material you are studying comes from? Circle one.

a) Uganda b) missionaries c) Europe or America d) other

15. Which word below is closest to the same meaning as the word “education”? Circle only one.

a) training b) schooling c) learning

16. Which of the following helps you to learn best? Circle only one.

a) listening to lectures b) reading books c) discussions
d) writing essays e) practicals

17. In one sentence only, please explain what you think it means to “do theology”.

18. What do you plan on doing after you finish this program of study?

APPENDIX THREE
CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

Theological Discourses

School:
Teacher:
Date:

Duration of Class:

Discussions	Topic	Purpose->: Clarification	Extending the Discourse	Application	Time Spent

Orality and Literacy Emphasis in Pedagogical Approach

Orality

Form	Time Spent	Comments
Lecture/listening		
Discussion		
Questions		
Answers		
LITERACY		
Using Texts		
Writing		

Other Observations:

Appendix Four

Semi-structured Interview Framework

The following topics and questions provided a framework and outline to guide the in-depth semi-structured interviews. This framework served to remind the researcher of important issues to be pursued, yet it provided flexibility as to the ordering and prioritising of questions and issues. Such flexibility meant that not all questions were asked of all respondents. It is organised according to population samples in order to facilitate appropriate questions for each sample. As the fieldwork progressed, this framework was adjustable to enable the further pursuit of areas of emergent data. Focus groups followed this basic framework as well.

Church Leaders

Background Information

- Name
- Positions held within the church
- Education history – state schooling and theological education

General Objectives and Condition of Theological Education

- What is your evaluation of the state of theological education in your denomination right now?
 - Strengths and weaknesses
- What are the most important qualities of effective Ugandan pastors?
 - What role does theological education play in developing such qualities?
 - What characteristics do you want to see in theological education graduates?
- What are the most important things a pastor should know?
 - Where should or do pastors learn these things?

Ownership of Theological Education

- What is different or should be different about theological education in Uganda than in other places?
- What makes theological education distinctively Ugandan? What could make it more Ugandan in nature?
- Who determines the form and curricula used?
- How is theological education funded in general?
 - What effect does this have on the character or nature of theological education in Uganda?
 - What effect does this have on how students and churches perceive theological education?

Language

- What language is the most appropriate for theological education? Why?
- What language do you use for your own personal study?

Orality and Literacy

- When are Ugandan pastors most innovative or effective in their application of scripture to life?
- What stimulates new theological thinking among pastors here?
 - Books? Church problems? Discussions with other pastors?
- How do most Ugandan pastors continue to learn after they have finished theological education?
- Do you think it is more important for students or pastors to be able to read and write about theological issues or to be able to discuss them verbally? Which do you think they usually do better?

Donors

- In your opinion, who finances most theological education in Uganda?
- How does this or should this effect what programmes are developed in the country?
- Is there a need to change the financing of theological education in Uganda? What can or should be done to change the present financing system for theological education?

Reflecting on Opportunity

- What was the most valuable aspect of your theological education?
- What do you think it means to 'do theology' in Uganda? Do you think students in Uganda develop the ability to do theology? If so, where and how do they learn that? If not, why not?
- If one or two aspects of theological education could be changed, what would those be and why?

Teachers of Theology

Background Information

- Name
- Positions held within the church
- Education history – state schooling and theological education
- How long have you been teaching theology?
- What motivates you to teach?

Students

- What are the characteristics of a good student?
- What are the characteristics of a poor student?
- What do you want students to know when they graduate?
- What do you want students to do when they graduate?

Curriculum

- What is good about the curriculum here?
- What could be better in the curriculum?
- Where did this curriculum come from? What sources were used in developing it? Were you involved in developing it?
- Would you say it is appropriate for Uganda?
- Is it more Ugandan or Western? Should it be more Ugandan or Western?

Language

- What language do you use for teaching?
- What are the benefits and drawbacks of teaching in a vernacular?
- What are the benefits of teaching in English versus an indigenous language?
- What are the drawbacks of teaching in English?
- How well do you think students understand and communicate their ideas in English? How could they be helped to do better?

Orality and Literacy

- Do you think most students are prepared for the way you teach here or do they need some time to adjust to the way things are done in the school?
- What do students need to be able to do or understand in your classes in order to really comprehend what you are teaching?
- How do students learn best in Uganda?
- How do students handle reading assignments? Discussions?
- How do you evaluate their comprehension?
- Do you notice much difference between those students who come with minimal formal education and those who have a bit more? Please explain.
 - How would you compare those who come with a primary seven level education and those who have a secondary four ('O' level) education?

Ownership

- Who really develops the programme of study here? Who has the real power to make decisions?
- How do you decide what and how to teach? How much freedom do you have to be innovative?
- Are you able to teach things you have learned on your own? Should you be able to do this or not?

Reflecting on Opportunity

- How do you think students really learn best?
- What could be done to make theological education more effective and appropriate?
- What do you think it means to 'do theology' in Uganda? Do you think students in Uganda develop the ability to do theology? To think critically? If so, where and how do they learn that? If not, why not?

Students

Background Information

- Name
- Home area and language
- Age
- Positions held within the Church
 - How long have you held these positions or worked in your church?
- Education history – state schooling and theological education
- What was your occupation at home (other than church work)?
 - How did you learn that occupation?

- Was it easier to learn that or theology? Why?

Purpose and Overview

- Why did you want to study theology at this school?
- What do you do best as a student?
- What is hardest for you as a student?
- Was it hard for you to adjust to studies when you first began theological education? If so, what was hard about it? How did you make the adjustments?
- What do you like most about studying here?
- What do you like the least?

Ownership of Knowledge and the Curriculum

- Whose school is this? Who really makes the big decisions?
- Where do the things you learn come from?
- What is the most valuable thing you learn here? How will you use it?
- What are your exams like here? How do you know what answer to give?

Orality and Literacy

- How much reading do you do everyday for school? How much do you read just for yourself?
- Do you enjoy reading? Is it difficult?
- How much do you talk in class?
- Would you rather learn through discussions or reading?
- Is all of the Bible true?
- Why do you think your teachers have you read texts? What do you think you should do with what you read?
- What is more authoritative – something written in a book or something someone like a teacher tells you? How do you know?
- Is it okay to disagree or argue about what is in a textbook?
- Do you like writing? Why do you like or dislike it?
- Do you think it is better to read what ‘experts’ have written about theology or to try to figure it out yourself?
- Have you ever defended what you believe in writing? Orally? Which do you feel you could do best? Which is more important?

Language

- When you are not at school, what language do you use in church or with Christians the most?
- What language would you like to study theology in the most? Why?

Teachers

- What is the difference between a good teacher and a poor teacher?

Donors

- Where do you think most of the money for running this school comes from?

Reflection

- What do you do best as a leader in the church? How did you learn that?

- What is the best thing about this school?
- What is the biggest problem about the way you learn or the things you learn at this school?
- How do you learn best?

Graduates

Begin with the same questions as those for students, but add and emphasise the following reflective questions about learning and theologising.

- What did you enjoy most about theological education?
- What would you change about theological education to make it more effective and appropriate?
- What have you found to be the most valuable aspect of your theological education in your church work?
- How do you continue to learn now?
- When you face an issue that you don't have an answer for, what do you do? Where do you get the answer?
- How do you think students learn best?

Missionaries

Background Information

- Name
- Home country and language
- Role in theological education
- Education history – state schooling and theological education

Overview and Purpose

- What is your evaluation of the state of theological education in your denomination right now?
 - Strengths and Weaknesses
- What motivates you to be involved in theological education? What are your goals and objectives?

Ownership of Knowledge and Curriculum

- How do you decide what material to use in teaching?
- What material have you found to be most helpful in developing your teaching?
- Who determines the institutional and pedagogical form for theological education here?
- Who determines the curriculum that is used in theological education in Uganda?
- What is different or distinctive about theological education here than in your home country?
- Do you think most theological education in Uganda is effective? Appropriate?
- What makes theological education Ugandan or Western in character?

Language

- What language is the most appropriate for theological education in Uganda? Why?
- What are the benefits and drawbacks of teaching in a vernacular?
- What are the benefits of teaching in English versus an indigenous language?

- What are the drawbacks of teaching in English?
- How well do you think students understand and communicate their ideas in English? How could they be helped to do better?

Orality and Literacy

- How do you think Ugandans learn best?
 - What could be done to facilitate this?
 - What are the possible barriers?
- How do students manage reading material?
 - How well do they comprehend what they read?
 - Do you think they enjoy reading?
- Have you noticed any difference in how students respect or use text versus discussion or oral teaching?
- Have you used debates or discussion much? In what ways do you think these might be useful teaching tools?
- In your experience, what stimulates theological thinking among students?
- How do students in Uganda learn best?
 - What could be done to facilitate this kind of learning?
 - What barriers are there to this kind of learning?

Donors

- In your opinion, who finances most theological education in Uganda?
- How does this or should this affect what programmes are developed in the country? How does it influence the way in which theological programmes are developed?
- What can or should be done to change the present financing system for theological education?

Reflections

- What do you think stimulates theological thinking among students?
- If you could change one aspect of theological education in Uganda, what would it be? Why would you want to change it?
- What do you think it means to 'do theology' in Uganda?
- Do you think theological students in Uganda develop the ability to do theology? If so, where and how do they learn that? If not, why not?

Life Histories

Young Childhood Learning Experiences

- Home area
- Parents' occupations and education
- When and how did you become a Christian?
- What important things did you learn before or outside of school and how did you learn them?

Formal Schooling Experience.

- Did you attend the formal state schooling programme? If so, how many years did you complete in that system?
- What aspects of that schooling have you found most valuable in life?

- What was the best aspect of that experience?
- What was the most difficult aspect of that experience?

Church Experience

- How did you first get involved in church work?
- What are your current responsibilities in the church?
- How did you progress from the beginning to now in church leadership?

Theological Education

- What level of theological education did you achieve?
- How long did you study in a theological education programme?
- What language(s) was used?
- What was the most useful aspect of your theological education?
- What was the most difficult aspect of your theological education?
- Why did you want to attend theological school?
- Why did you stop?
- Did theological education teach you to think on your own?

Reflections on Theological Education in Context of Whole Life

- What are the key factors that went into forming you into the person you are today?
 - What were the best influences?
 - What role to theological education play?
 - How do you wish theological education had prepared you better?
- When and where did you learn the most important aspects of being a pastor. Of doing theology?
- How do you apply the Bible to problems you face today? What is the process you use?
- When you look back on your theological education, how important was it overall in your leadership development?
- What would you change about your theological education if you could reach back in time and change it?

Evaluation of theological education today.

- How have you trained other pastors to do ministry in the church?
- What do you think motivates students to study today?
- What are the characteristics of the best leaders in the church?
- What are the characteristics of the best students?
- Are schools today better or worse than in your day? Explain.
- What language should be used in theological education?

APPENDIX FIVE

SOURCES OF ORAL DATA

Interviews

NAME	CHURCH	PLACE	STATUS	DATE
Kaiso, Moses	BUU	WUBTC	Graduate, Instructor	07/11/2000 * ¹
Masereka, Zebedee	COU	Kasese	Bishop	13/11/2000
Bwambale, Alex	BUU	Kasese	Graduate	13/11/2000
Bwambale, Eli	BUU	Kasese	Graduate	13/11/2000
Baluku, Zapierre	BUU	WUBTC	Student	02/12/2000 *
Murengerantwari, Phabian	BUU	WUBTC	Student	03/12/2000 *
Kambale, Alfonse	BUU	Kasese	Graduate	04/12/2000
Nkaiganabo, Egedio	RCC	Kasese	RCC Bishop	4/12/2000
Ikonia, Ndungo	BUU	WUBTC	Graduate, Instructor	07/12/2000 *
Bisset, Bill		Jinja	Missionary, Educator	22/01/2001 *
Sivage, Vernon		Jinja	Missionary, Academic Dean	22/01/2001 *

¹ An asterisk denotes that multiple follow-up interviews took place after this initial interview.

Kabukula, Herbert	BUU	Jinja	Graduate, Instructor	23/01/2001
Oroyma, Moses Mulago	BUU	Jinja	Graduate, Instructor	23/01/2001
McDermott, Thomas	RCC	Jinja	RCC, Rector	25/01/2001 *
Ntamugaboumwe, Aloys	BUU	Masaka	BUU Regional Overseer	07/02/2001 *
Kyomya, Michael	COU	Jinja	COU Busoga Bishop	21/02/2001 *
Byler, Otto	RCC	Kasese	RCC Missionary Priest	19/03/2001
Byabanobi, Deo	RCC	Nsenyi	Instructor, Director	21/03/2001 *
Bwambale, Yosia	BUU	WUBTC	Graduate	22/03/2001
Humphreys	BUU	WUBTC	Student	22/03/2001
Pierre	BUU	WUBTC	Student	23/03/2001 *
Augustino	RCC	Nsenyi	Instructor	26/03/2001 *
Stephano	RCC	Nsenyi	Student	26/03/2001
Kidogo, Mali	RCC	Nsenyi	Graduate, Instructor	26/03/2001
Rev. Yotham	COU	Kisinga	Instructor, Director	27/03/2001 *
Rev. Benjamin	COU	Kisinga	Graduate, Instructor	28/03/2001
Abendroth, Dallas		Jinja	Missionary,	02/04/2001 *

			Instructor	
Kabarole	BUU	Jinja	Student	02/04/2001
Onono, Celcius	BUU	Jinja	Student	03/04/2001
Odonyo, Augustuf	BUU	Jinja	Graduate, Instructor	04/04/2001
Frost, Jack		Jinja	Missionary, Principal	05/04/2001 *
Sorensen, Stanley		Kabale	Missionary	08/04/2001 *
Otto, Dick		Kampala	Missionary	20/04/2001 *
Wanyama, Alex	BUU	Kampala	Graduate, BUU General Secretary	25/04/2001 *
Kivunike, James	COU	Jinja	Diocesan Education Secretary, COU	26/04/2001 * Life History
Masereka, Sitariko	BUU	WUBTC	Instructor	15/05/2001 *
Bisika, Amona	BUU	Kasese	BUU Regional Overseer	15/05/2001 * Life History
Kisambira, Nelson	COU	Kamuli	Arch Deacon, Educator	17/05/2001
Mpande, George	COU	Kamuli	Priest, Director	18/05/2001 *
Ssemiti, Richard	BUU	Masaka	Student	27/05/2001
Wandawa, Philip		Kampala	Educator, Director	29/05/2001 *

Kisira, Simon		Kampala	Programme Manager, LABE	09/07/2001 *
Musiime, Reuben		Kampala	Educator	10/07/2001 *
Okwakol, Michael	BUU	Kampala	Graduate, Past BUU General Secretary	10/07/2001
Katahoire, Anne		Makerere	Professor	16/07/2001
Okech, Anthony		Makerere	Professor	23/07/2001

In addition to the in-depth interviews listed above, informal conversational interviews were conducted with thirty other students, as mentioned previously. These confirmed the data collected through semi-formal interviews.

Focus Groups

Participants (No.)²	Church	Place	Date
CBI Missionaries (7)		Kabale	24/02/01
Students (7)	RCC	Nsenyi	26/03/01
Instructors (3)	RCC	Nsenyi	26/03/01
Students (3)	BUU	WUBTC	27/03/01
Students (8)	COU	Kisinga	27/03/01
Priests/Instructors (3)	COU	Kamuli	26/04/01

² The parenthesis designates the number of participants.

PRA Groups

Participants (No.)	Church	Place	Date
Students (10)	BUU	WUBTC	09/11/00
Students (3)	RCC	Nsenyi	26/03/01
Students (4)	RCC	Nsenyi	26/03/01
Students (6)	BUU	UBS	04/04/01

APPENDIX SIX

PRA MAPPING EXERCISES

The following two maps were generated through PRA sessions with students at WUBTC in Kasese and UBS in Jinja. They each picture the college campus where these students were studying. As explained in the text of this thesis, it is not the layout of the institutions which is instructive so much as the students' explanation of activities which took place in different localities and the value or benefit accredited to those activities. A brief description will enable the reader to relate these maps to PRA sessions as discussed in the main text.

WUBTC – KASESE

This map is divided into two portions. At the top are the residential and academic buildings. Below these are the fields which are allocated to the students for farming in order to produce their own food. The two uppermost buildings are two duplexes which house the director and the resident instructors. The large building to the right and below the faculty housing is the academic building which includes two classrooms, an office and a library. Below this are five buildings which are subdivided into four sections each. These are student housing. The faculty housing is separated from the student housing by a large courtyard filled with trees and hedges.

The dark circle in the middle of the student housing area represents the students sitting under a large shade tree. It is here that they discussed personal problems such as how to get food and medicines. More importantly, this is the location that was repeatedly referred to as the place they would sit to discuss what they thought they had heard in the classroom. It was here that they persistently used their primary discourse in the attempt to make sense of the secondary academic discourse of the college. Peer activities which depicted the value they placed upon working and learning together are illustrated by the three figures carrying water up from the river during a drought (on the right of the map), by the figures in the centre of the college courtyard teaching Bible lessons together and helping to distribute food during a

drought, and by the figures on the left side who are working together to carry one of the student's wives to the hospital seven kilometres away.

UBS – JINJA

The building at the top left is the academic building with a classroom, a library and offices. Student and staff (Ugandan faculty) housing are on the right of the map, separated by a tree and a large hedge. Below and to the left is housing for temporary teachers. Permanent missionary faculty lived off campus.

The students ranked the two most important places where learning took place. These are identified by the numbers 1 and 2. They then listed on the map why each of these place were important. As mentioned in the text, although they ranked the classroom as the most important place on campus, they talked much more extensively about all that they learned when sitting together under the trees. The library was never mentioned as a place of learning or of importance until they were specifically asked about it.

